MAY/JUNE 2014

SPECIAL REPORT:
SUSTAINABLE SHRIMP

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46 Easy Healthy Recipes

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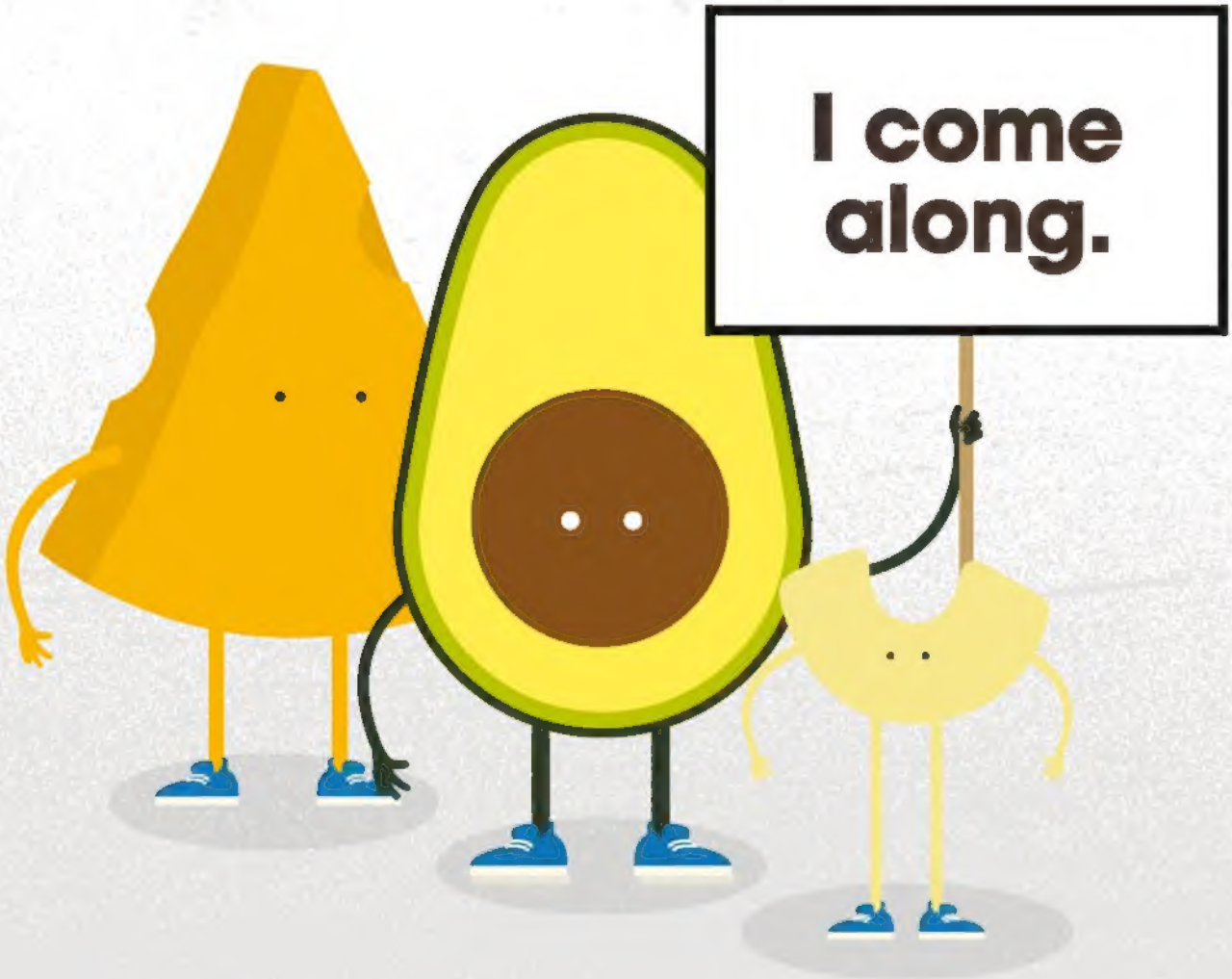

Avocados from Mexico
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avocadosfrommexico.com

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Planning a get-together? Start with a chopped salad (page 62).

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Best part of summer: big outdoor dinners like this Tex-Mex spread cooked by my uncle Chris (*head of table*).

That's me in 1984 (*far right*) at our annual lobster feast.

The reclaimed wood that Vermont Farm Table uses would be a great fit for the casual porch dinners at my new cottage.

Picking the Perfect Table

I'm in search of a dining table. It needs to be long, sturdy and definitely not fussy. It will need to withstand years of spills, dripped candle wax, my nieces' scribbles and maybe a little rain. The table is for the summer cottage that my husband, John, and I bought last fall with my sister and her husband. Though the cottage was mostly furnished, the previous owner, a family friend, took a few things including the rough-hewn porch dining table. She said her kids were attached to the table because of all the memories of boisterous family meals growing up in that house. It meant a lot to them. We could relate. In my extended family, summers have always revolved around the moments spent sitting at the table on the porch with a crowd of neighbors, friends and relatives, eating, telling stories and laughing into the wee hours of the night.

> That table will be the hub and the heart of our new home.

This spring there's been plenty to do to get ready for our move into the cottage, but it's the table that I've really been contemplating most. That table will be the hub and the heart of our new home. So I've scoured antique stores. And I visited my neighbor Dustin Glasscoe, who started Vermont Farm Table, where they build gorgeous furniture from reclaimed wood like old barn boards.

Whichever table we land on, I already have plans for it. For Memorial Day we'll pack it with juicy grilled chicken, pickled vegetables (*page 68*) and baked beans from the slow cooker (*page 48*). We'll pass a huge wooden salad bowl so everyone can help themselves to chopped salads full of the best produce of the season, from nectarines to cucumbers to scallions (*page 62*). And for John's birthday (if I get ambitious) I'll make the trifle cake stacked with creamy filling, peaches and raspberries (*page 56*) and carry it out to him, lit up with candles.

Looking forward to those meals gets me thinking: maybe it's not so much about finding that perfect table. Maybe it's just about gathering up the people I love—to share a meal, drink a little wine, talk and, most of all, laugh... until late into the night.

Cheers,

Jessie

Jessie Price, *editor@eatingwell.com*

P.S. As always, email me your thoughts on the magazine at *editor@eatingwell.com*. And to give more formal feedback, join our reader roundtable at *eatingwell.com/ReaderRoundtable*.

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Heart-smart.

49 PISTACHIOS

- 160 calories
- 6 grams protein
- 3 grams fiber

Dumb-dumb.

13 FLAVORED TORTILLA CHIPS

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- 2 grams protein
- 1 gram fiber

You don't have to be a genius to realize that for the same amount of calories you get more snackisfaction from a fistful of pistachios than you do from a few measly flavored tortilla chips. And get this: pistachios are naturally cholesterol and trans fat free, a good source of protein and fiber, and heart-friendly. Now that's snackin' with smarts.

Get Crackin'

Scientific evidence suggests but does not prove that eating 1.5 ounces per day of most nuts, such as pistachios, as part of a diet low in saturated fat and cholesterol may reduce the risk of heart disease. See nutrition information for fat content. ©2014 Paramount Farms International LLC. All rights reserved. WONDERFUL, GET CRACKIN', the Package Design and accompanying logos are registered trademarks of Paramount Farms International LLC. WP10238

If readers had not experienced "The Joy of Tofu," I am sure they have now. Wow! Crispy glazed tofu with bok choy—great taste, good nutrition. The article about " The Guru of Grass" has convinced me to "beef up" my plant-based diet.

MARCIA MILBRATH, *Cushing, WI*

Two Sides of Beef

I received my first issue of *EatingWell*. I was so impressed. I especially enjoyed the article on "The Guru of Grass" by Jane Black. Will Harris is my hero. I appreciate that he is a good steward of the animals and the land. I have never written to a magazine editor before, but this time I felt compelled.

MARJ WISKER, *Martinsburg, PA*

I thought "The Guru of Grass" was just phenomenal! I don't eat very much beef anymore, but I would if I had access to beef raised in that manner. What a hopeful story. Kudos to Will Harris. Thank you for publishing such a wonderful, informative article.

SUSAN KAPUT, *Dartmouth, MA*

I am not a fan of bashing the beef industry. While the grass-fed/organic approach works for Mr. Harris, there is another side of the industry that produces just as quality, sustainable beef. We use pesticide on our grass, so the bugs don't eat it all down to the dirt. We give our cows vaccinations, so they don't get diseases that could affect the whole herd. We treat our cattle like family. Our children get medicine, so do our cows. Our animals run in the pastures, summer on beautiful mountains and come home for the winter to eat the hay we have put up. Without pesticides and antibiotics our animals would not prosper as they do. You don't have to be an organic ranch to know right from wrong.

CARA MURRAY, *Lapoint, UT*

Understanding Sodium

Thank you for "The Truth About Sodium" article in the March/April issue. I have tagged it with a note to my husband, "Please read." So much better coming from you rather than me!

KELLY GEORGE, *Wilmington, NC*

I just read "The Truth About Sodium." To my surprise, it had a dated point of view. If we pull back the lens and look at sodium, it's not the minute decisions people make in a day but their overall approach to food. Many Americans are still dependent on industrialized food that is full of sodium, fat and other ingredients I cannot even pronounce. Sodium is rarely (if ever) an issue for someone who eats unprocessed food. Recommending that someone switch out a nonfat frozen yogurt for a fruit sorbet is missing the point.

KEVYN ALLARD, M.S.
President, Total Corporate Wellness
Woodside, CA

EDITOR'S REPLY: *While we did get into the details about sodium levels in specific foods, we agree on the big picture—what's most important is a healthy diet with less processed foods and lots of produce. The purpose of that recommendation was to help readers understand that some foods that are (or seem to be) healthy can deliver more sodium than we realize.*

The MSG Controversy

EDITOR'S NOTE: *In our March/April story "The Truth About Sodium," we reported on the lack of scientific proof showing that MSG causes symptoms including headaches and shortness of breath (aka Chinese Restaurant Syndrome). We heard from a number of readers via email and social media. The gist of their feedback: some people feel better when they stop eating MSG. Our thought: perhaps further research is in order.*

Back to Basics

I was so happy to see articles about sustainable farming and grass-fed beef, seed diversity and a recipe for fermented sauerkraut in your current issue! These traditional practices are important to health and I'm so happy to see them stepping into the mainstream more. I'd love to see more articles and recipes in your magazine along these lines.

AMBER PENA, *Cottonwood Heights, UT*

The Low-Fat Myth

"5 Diet Mistakes Everyone Makes" [*Fresh*] was interesting because No. 5 suggests avoiding foods labeled low-fat. I have to agree with that, but then I noticed that almost every recipe in your magazine called for one or more low-fat ingredients. I am amazed at the unhealthy habits that are promoted as healthy. My hope is that people will understand that all those so-called "diet foods" are not doing them any good.

TIERSA JERGESEN, *Tigard, OR*

EDITOR'S REPLY: *We agree that real, whole foods are preferable to "diet foods." However, certain low- or reduced-fat products (especially dairy like milk or yogurt) are a great way to limit unhealthy saturated fat.*

Tofu for Meat Lovers

I'm a new subscriber and just tried my first recipe, Tofu Stroganoff [*Market Pick*]. It was awesome! My husband couldn't believe it was made with tofu; he said I *definitely* have to make this one again.

CAROL MCEVOY, *Carol Stream, IL*

Feedback on Feedback

I read the comments from March/April and saw people were disappointed in the way the magazine was [covering dieting]. There is nothing wrong with addressing weight loss. I started eating only clean, natural and homemade foods and lost 4 pounds. Eating well means you will naturally lose weight, so the magazine should be able to have articles about diet and losing weight. Just because you're size 6 doesn't mean you're healthy; you can have an unhealthy body-fat percentage. Keep going. I love this magazine.

THYME K. LEIGH, *Mansfield, NJ*

We want to hear from you! Send your comments to editor@eatingwell.com

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FRESH

Apricots are one of nature's tastiest health foods: packed with vitamin A, potassium and lycopene and just 17 calories each

Precious Harvest

Grab hold of the swoon-worthy apricot. Its season is fleeting. By Robin Chapman

Apricots are a delightful assault on the senses: sun-hued, sweetly tart, velvety-soft and scented with hints of jasmine, honeysuckle and almond. They're almost too good to be true. And with their brief growing season and fragile nature, you've got to grab them fast.

Die-hard apricot fans crave the now-rare Blenheim. Sweeter and smaller than most varieties, it's touted for its knock-you-over apricot aroma. Even dried, Blenheims retain their moist and intense flavor. One mecca for Blenheims and other apricots is Andy's Orchard (*andysorchard.com*)—one of the last old California orchards, where second-generation 'cot-farmer Andy Mariani nurtures 20 heirloom varieties (*pictured here laid out to dry in the sun*). Each summer, his annual apricot tasting draws a huge crowd.

Apricots first came to America in the 1700s with Spanish priests, who planted them in their California mission gardens. Until the 1970s, most of the apricots grown in the United States were Blenheims from the sunny Santa Clara Valley—an area now better known as Silicon Valley. With hundreds of thousands of acres in cultivation at its peak, it was once the largest orchard region in the world. But the high-tech explosion transformed the region. Now only a fraction of the amount of apricots grow in California as once did—less-expensive dried apricots from Turkey made competition tough—and most come from farther east, in the San Joaquin Valley.

DAVE LAUK DSEN PHOTOGRAPHY

where land is cheaper and the more travel-friendly Patterson variety grows.

Apricots grow well in only a few places in the world, so don't let their precious season pass you by. If you can't get your hands on a fresh Blenheim, there are bushels of other mouthwatering varieties deserving of your love, such as Nicole and Bonny Royal. And to those who love them, like Mariani, apricots are finer than the best wine, rarer than the most exotic caviar. "Just bite into one," he says. You'll be hooked.

When fresh apricots aren't available, dried apricots can be divine. Some are preserved with sulfur dioxide, a sulfite that prevents browning. The FDA and the Center for Science in the Public Interest consider the amounts found in dried fruits safe. However, if you have asthma or a sulfite sensitivity (about one in 100 Americans do), this preservative can cause allergic reactions, so look for unsulfured.

A NEW WAY TO TRY DRIED APRICOTS

Apricot-Pistachio Cream Cheese Spread: Blend 8 ounces reduced-fat cream cheese, ½ cup chopped dried apricots, ½ cup chopped unsalted pistachios and 1 tablespoon honey in a bowl until well combined. **MAKES:** 1½ CUPS (1-TBSP SERVING)

67,000 That's how many people have savored fresh, back-to-the land meals in postcard-gorgeous settings since chef Jim Denevan first launched Outstanding in the Field, an organization whose mission is to connect diners to the origins of their food. "People see names of farmers and food artisans on restaurant menus, but to come and dine on the farm, walk around and talk to the food producers, brings it all together in a very powerful way. It's been incredibly transformative," says Denevan. This year marks the project's 15th anniversary. When Denevan started, the farm-to-table concept was pretty foreign. "I thought, no one's putting a table at the source of the food. My brother had an organic farm—I knew how beautiful that could be." Check out the tour schedule at *outstandinginthefield.com* and get tickets for a 5-course al fresco feast. *—Gretel H. Schueller*

America's Diet: Better Every Day

Americans are eating better, says a new report from the USDA. Whether it's thanks to us getting smarter about our diets or as a result of having less money to spend because of the economic downturn in 2008, it's good news. There is, of course, still room for improvement, but here are a few positive changes we made between 2005 and 2010, the period covered in the report (all data is for working-age adults).

BY THE NUMBERS

79 Fewer calories eaten each day per person

42% People using the nutrition facts panel when food shopping (up from 34% in 2007)

$30 Decline in food spending (mainly due to eating more meals at home)

7.5% Increase in daily fiber consumed (equal to 1.2 grams daily or 4 baby carrots)

127 Fewer calories eaten away from home every day per person

TOP: PETER ARDITO. STYLING: KAREN GILLINGHAM/FOOD52. BOTTOM: JEREMY PENSAK. ILLUSTRATION: CHRISTINA SINGER

incredible!

WAKE UP TO EGGS

Eggs now have even more Vitamin D, naturally. Nothing artificial. And they're a good source of high-quality protein too.

IncredibleEdibleEgg

According to the USDA Nutrient Database for Standard Reference, the average amount of vitamin D in one large egg is 41 IU, up from 25 IU. Brought to you by 9 real incredible Farmers

50-1000
Number of flowers a bee visits during one collecting trip
1/12
teaspoon
Amount of honey a honeybee will make in its lifetime

a plea for bees

Without bees, we'd lose more than just honey

Our country's most efficient pollinator, the domesticated honeybee, is in decline. We talked with Dennis vanEngelsdorp, Ph.D. (*below*)—an entomologist at the University of Maryland and one of the first to see honeybees were in trouble 10 years ago—about why we should be concerned.

Why are honeybees in decline?
We continue to see high levels of mortality; whole hives are disappearing. Each year, we continue to lose an average of 30% of our colonies. We think it's caused by the equivalent of bee flu. When bees are sick they leave the hive to prevent other bees from getting sick. The big question is, why are bees succumbing to flu and to a combination of other viruses and pathogens? The three biggest factors are increasing pesticides, varroa mites and poor nutrition; all weaken the bees' immune systems. As land is developed, bees are having a harder time finding food. And pesticide use is pervasive—in agriculture and at our homes. In one study, we found 21 different types of pesticides in pollen. Per acre, people use more pesticides on yards and gardens than on any agricultural crop.

What about the recent effort to ban a class of pesticides called neonicotinoids?
It won't have much impact. This class of synthetic pesticides is banned in Europe, but they're not the only chemicals weakening bee health. There are a lot of others that may have just as much or more of an effect. In a recent study, for example, we found that two widely used fungicides are showing up in bee pollen and making bees more than two times as susceptible to a fungal infection. Another study found that exposure to pyrethroids [which constitute most commercial household insecticides] stunts bee growth, causing them to be less effective at foraging.

Should we be worried about other bees?
Yes. Domesticated honeybees, which were brought to the Americas in the 1800s, are used to pollinate many commercial crops. But we need native bees too. We need squash bees for squash, bumblebees for blueberries. Yet three species of bumblebee have gone extinct over the last 20 years. Studies suggest that restoring habitat near farms to nurture native bees would increase crop yields. There are about 4,000 species of bees native to the United States. And most need our help.

What You Can Do to Help

Buy Local Honey: It supports local beekeepers. Plus, it's good for the environment: compared to other sweeteners, it requires the least amount of carbon to get to your table, says vanEngelsdorp.

Garden: Make your outdoor space pollinator-friendly. Visit *pollinator.org/guides.htm* to find pollinator-friendly plants. Pick a variety of plants so you can provide blooms throughout the season, and skip commercial pesticides, herbicides and fungicides in favor of bee-friendly alternatives like insecticidal soaps. Check out *gardensalive.com*.

Make a Home: Nest sites—such as bamboo tubes, boxes or hollow logs—can help attract and protect native bees (most are stingless). Many, like leafcutter bees—great pollinators of summer veggies and herbs—are declining because they can't find enough nesting sites.

Go Organic: Vote with your fork—to reduce the use of synthetic pesticides and other harmful chemicals—by buying organic when possible. While some organic pesticides can harm pollinators—such as pyrethrin and spinosad—most are still a safer and better choice for bees.

If we did not have bees, our diet would be a lot less diverse, and pricier. About 33% of what we eat comes from food pollinated by bees. Almonds, asparagus, apples, blueberries, avocado, broccoli, onion, cherries and cucumber are just a few of the foods we'd say goodbye to. The shortages wouldn't just affect fruits and veggies; even milk would become scarce. That's because the protein-rich alfalfa that dairy cows eat needs pollinators to produce seed. Fewer bees leads to smaller harvests and higher food costs.

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT © JANNAH SUTTERFIELD; © DAVID HOUTON PHOTOGRAPHY; © ELLEN PARASIMOCZ; © PHOTOGRAPHY; © CHRISTINA SINGER

MY TEA IS
SO FULL OF FLAVOR
THERE'S NO ROOM
FOR CALORIES
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Crystal Light
Every tiny win deserves a celebration.
Like delicious low calorie *Crystal Light*.
A SIP IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION

SHOP SMART by Lisa D'Agrosa, M.S., R.D.

Veggie Burgers: Inside the Box

This vegetarian mainstay of the grilling season is certainly convenient. But are frozen veggie burgers as healthy as they seem? Most are low in calories and have at least 3 grams of fiber. Yet they're not all so innocent. Here's what to look for

Numbers to Look For

Serving Size	**1 patty**
Amount Per Serving	
Sodium	**≤ 400 mg**
Protein	**≥ 5 g**

Brands We Like: We sampled a variety of burgers and flavors to find ones that topped out on taste *and* health. Here are some of our favorites:

- Sol Spicy Black Bean (vegan, gluten-free)
- Amy's Bistro Veggie Burger (gluten-free)
- Morningstar Farms Mediterranean Chickpea

Check the Ingredient List: Some brands have a long list of ingredients that you wouldn't find in a homemade version. For the cleanest burger, look for one with ingredients you recognize.

Be Sodium Savvy: Many veggie burgers can boast 500 mg of sodium. Sandwich your burger in a bun and top it with classics like ketchup, cheese and pickles and you're looking at half a day's worth of sodium

Get Your Protein: When you opt for a veggie burger over meat, it's typically the main source of protein at your meal. Look for one with at least 5 grams of protein (10% of the recommended daily value). Most burgers get their protein from beans and soy (often listed as textured vegetable protein).

HOMEMADE VEGGIE BURGER RECIPES at eatingwell.com/webextra

Label Watch: Evaporated Cane Juice

Typically Found In: Yogurt, crackers, drinks
What You Need to Know: Sugar goes by many names and evaporated cane juice is one. In 2009, the FDA asked the food industry to stop using the phrase on the ingredient list, saying it was misleading since the product is a syrup that's been dried into crystals. However, many food producers continue to use the term "evaporated cane juice" and recently have had lawsuits brought against them by consumers for using a deceptive term. Some lawsuits have settled, some have been dismissed and some are pending. However the rest of this story pans out, keep in mind that when you see "evaporated cane juice" on a label, it's simply sugar. —*L.D.*

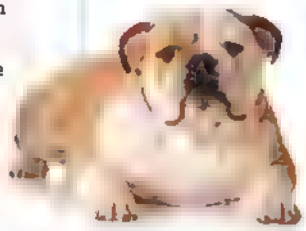
PET NUTRITION

Should I feed my overweight dog or cat a "lite" food?

Pet foods vary a lot in calories—and the labels aren't much help: foods labeled "light," "lite" or "low-calorie" have minimal government restrictions. Foods labeled "reduced calorie," "healthy weight" or "obese prone" are unregulated with respect to calories. This laxness means pet foods marketed for weight loss can range from 200 to 500 calories per cup. Adding to the confusion, feeding guidelines on labels vary and usually overestimate how much an overweight animal needs.

By 2015, all pet foods will be required to have calorie counts on the label. Until then, if it's not on the label, you can call the company. Aim for a food that has 300 calories or less per cup and feed the same volume your pet had been getting—then adjust as needed. (Go to *eatingwell.com/webextra* to calculate how many calories your pet needs.) Simply cutting down on your pet's current regular food reduces not just calories, but also essential nutrients. So go by the numbers, not the marketing, when choosing a food for your overweight pet and pick one lower in calories than what you're currently feeding.

Dr. Deborah Linder, DVM, DACVN,
Tufts Obesity Clinic for Animals



BURGERS: R.J. ALLEN STYLING; CAREY NEWSOM, DOG: ©WILLEECOLE SHUTTERSTOCK

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NATURAL BEAUTY by Lindsay Westley

Tea's Eye-Opening Benefit

Drinking green tea may reduce your risk of cancer, Alzheimer's and stroke, but tea's benefits don't stop there: new research shows it can also keep you looking younger. A recent study found that green tea extract applied to the eye area daily for 8 weeks diminished crow's-feet wrinkles. That's due to the high levels of antioxidants in green tea, which studies show also help reduce redness and puffiness (key if you're not getting enough sleep) when applied topically.

While the most potent green tea extracts are found in beauty products, you can still wring some benefits by steeping two green tea bags in hot water for 2 to 3 minutes. Then squeeze and chill in the refrigerator for 30 minutes. Place one cooled tea bag over each eye for 15 minutes, recommends Jolene Hart, a beauty nutrition expert and author of *Eat Pretty: Nutrition for Beauty, Inside and Out.*

Power Up Your Breakfast

Most Americans get 10 to 15 grams of protein at breakfast, but 30 grams may be the magic number to keep your appetite in check throughout the day and prevent weight gain. New research presented at the Obesity Society's annual meeting found that women who ate a protein-packed breakfast (30 grams from eggs and sausage) felt more satisfied and ate about 100 calories less at lunch compared to those who ate a low-protein pancake breakfast. A high-protein morning meal also quelled evening snacking (by about 135 calories) in a small study of teenagers.

"Protein is key for satiety because it activates the body's signals that curb appetite, reduce food cravings and prevent overeating," says Heather Leidy, Ph.D., lead author and assistant professor in the Department of Nutrition and Exercise Physiology at the University of Missouri. Her research shows protein does double duty on appetite control by helping reduce ghrelin, a hunger hormone, and stimulating the gut hormone peptide YY, which helps you feel full.

—Chris Mohr, Ph.D., R.D.

Try one of these breakfast ideas, packed with 30 grams of protein, for a healthy start to your day. *For nutrition information, see page 90.*

High-Protein Breakfast Tacos
Whisk 2 eggs and 2 egg whites. Coat a medium nonstick skillet with cooking spray; cook the eggs over medium heat, stirring, until almost set, 4 minutes. Fold in 2 Tbsp. shredded Cheddar cheese and ½ cup canned black beans, rinsed. Serve on 2 warm corn tortillas, with 4 tsp. salsa.

Nut & Berry Parfait
Layer 1 cup nonfat plain Greek yogurt, ½ cup fresh or frozen berries and ¼ cup sliced almonds in a bowl. Drizzle 2 tsp. honey on top.

EDITOR'S PICK "This 8-inch GreenGourmet nonstick, Teflon-free skillet is the perfect size for making omelets." *—Stacy Fraser, Test Kitchen Manager*

Broccoli-Parmesan Omelet
Whisk 2 eggs and 2 egg whites. Heat 1 tsp. olive oil in a medium nonstick skillet over medium heat. Add ½ cup chopped broccoli and 1 minced shallot; cook, stirring often, until tender, 5 minutes. Pour in the eggs, top with ¼ cup shredded Parmesan cheese, cover; cook until set, 3 to 4 minutes. Serve with sprouted-grain toast.

ASK THE NUTRITIONIST

Q. Should I try the alkaline diet?

A. Following the alkaline diet means eating mostly plants, limiting meat, skipping dairy, sweets, alcohol and caffeine and banishing processed food. Sounds like a healthy move, right?

Not so fast. Most of the touted health benefits of the alkaline diet aren't research-backed. The theory behind it is that our Western diet (rich with saturated fat, simple sugars and sodium and lacking in potassium, magnesium and fiber) produces acid, driving our body's pH down slightly, making it more acidic. So the thinking goes that having an acidic pH fuels chronic diseases like cancer, heart disease and obesity and promotes ailments like bloating and chronic fatigue. Eating a diet that makes your body more alkaline staves off those health problems. Nice theory. The reality is that your body, especially your kidneys and lungs, maintains a steady pH regardless of what you eat.

Another rub: the alkaline diet isn't intuitive. For one, some acidic foods—lemons, apple-cider vinegar—are actually considered alkaline-forming because of the way they're metabolized. And, as with many fad diets, some healthy foods are discouraged—in this case, navy beans, peanuts and whole eggs—because of their "acidic" properties.

However, the main tenet of eating the alkaline way—to fill your diet with plants—is great. Loads of research supports a plant-focused diet for a healthy weight and better health. Plus, some alkaline diet claims like preventing muscle loss and quelling chronic lower back pain have preliminary research supporting them. The diet may also help prevent kidney stones (your diet can affect the pH of your urine and more-acidic urine can increase your risk).

BOTTOM LINE The foods of the alkaline diet are healthy, but the diet's purported benefits still lack scientific support.

Send your nutrition questions to Nutrition Editor Brierley Wright, M.S., R.D. at *askus@eatingwell.com*

TOP LEFT: © EVGENIY KARANDAEV SHUTTERSTOCK. TOP RIGHT & BOTTOM: ER CA ALLEN STYLING: CARLY NERSESI. PLATE PAR BIGOT FROM SIMON PEARCE; PAN COURTESY CUISINART.

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Going Native

On the farm, when nature offers you food, you don't say no

By Kristin Kimball

One evening last spring I walked outside to call my family in for dinner. It had been raining all week and my husband, Mark, had taken advantage of a break in the clouds to let our girls, 5 and 2, run around before the kitchen exploded with their pent-up energy. I found the three of them next to a puddle in our long dirt driveway, bent over a crayfish. We have two ponds on our farm, and I guessed it had been trying to make its way from one to the other. Mark crouched down and the girls gathered around as he picked it up by its shell. It waved and snapped its little claws in the air, beadily eyeballing us giants. It managed, through force of will, to seem more formidable than its size. I am 5'2" and married to a man who is 6'6", so I know how that feels.

The girls took turns holding it, passing it back and forth. They stuck twigs in its claws to test its strength, until I reminded them that dinner was on the table. "Do you want to carry it to the pond?" Mark asked. Jane, the elder, squinted up at him. "Dad?" she asked, "Could we eat it?" She had not yet developed a good grasp of scale, and it reminded her of the lobster she'd savored at her grandmother's house the summer before.

I made the noise, familiar to my family, that expresses displeasure without actually saying no, and mentally collated my points of opposition. What was it doing out of the water, anyway? Maybe it was sick. I knew from other culinary adventures with my husband (hello, squirrel, and you too, pigeon) that this project held potential for mess and medium- to long-term household stink. Moreover, it seemed a little bloodthirsty. When I was Jane's age, my brother and I found a crayfish. We named it Crabby and made a pet of it. My girls find one and want to make a meal of it. I felt, for a moment, the misgiving of the missionary: I was raising my children in a savage land, and now they had gone native on me.

Food-wise, I was brought up in the middle-class normalcy of the 1970s and '80s, at the height of the freezer-to-microwave era. Eatable things came from the supermarket, in Styrofoam, very neatly separated from their origins. Mark was raised by back-to-the-land hippies who killed their own pigs and foraged the woods for wild food. When we married, I gave up the grocery store and converted to his way of eating. We started a farm together, where we raise a full, year-round diet of foods, including vegetables, grains, meat and milk, for 250 people. Our children are growing up almost entirely on what comes from the fields that surround our home. They wouldn't know a chicken nugget if they stepped on it, but they have known, almost from birth, that asparagus season gives way to strawberry season, followed by the pleasure of raspberries, then sweet corn. They have never been sheltered from slaughter or from the idea that the animals they know and care for become the food that nourishes us.

So, of course, I knew that when it came to that crayfish, I would be overruled. I'd chosen this way of life, and this farm as my home. Raising our own food has given our children adventurous palates and a deep understanding of how precious food is. When nature offers you seafood, Jane was thinking, you don't say no. In our home, feeling affection, wonder or love toward a creature and also wanting to eat it are not incompatible urges.

Jane nudged Mark's leg. "Can we, Daddy? Can we?" Mark looked sideways at me, and saw me nod. "Why didn't I think of that?" he said. She carried the tiny crustacean into the kitchen. Mark killed it quickly. Jane filled a pot with an inch of salted water, which I set to boil. The crayfish went into the pot and the girls stood on stools over the stove, watching it turn bright red. "It looks like a doll's lobster," Jane said, when it was out of the water and steaming on a plate. Mark peeled it and we ate a morsel of tail meat each, dipped in melted butter made from our own cows' cream. It was exquisite: rich, sweet and pleasantly fishy. And that was exactly, I thought, how a doll's lobster should taste.

Kristin Kimball is the author of The Dirty Life: A Memoir of Farming, Food and Love. *She and her family run Essex Farm in northern New York. She blogs at* kristinkimball.com.

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WEEKNIGHTS

Farmers' Market Fresh

5 quick and tasty meals that make the most of this season's best produce

Here in northern Vermont, the Burlington farmers' market moves back outside in May, this year just in time for Mother's Day. And not a moment too soon—I'm tired of making do with supermarket produce from parts unknown. Bring on the fresh vegetables!

So on any given Saturday I'll be part of the crowd strolling in the welcome sunlight from stall to stall. Visiting with the folks who grew, picked, packed and hauled the produce from their farms gives me an immediate grasp of what's in season right now, right here. That's local. So local, in fact, that the snap peas and fennel I've been craving are grown by a farmer who's also one of our state representatives. That very night, I'll turn them into a fresh and lovely slaw to pair with seared salmon. (The fennel fronds make a nice garnish.) A bunch of dark green kale and an early tomato go into my bag to layer with Gruyère into a splendid, savory, cheesy panini. Everywhere you look at the farmers' market, dinner inspiration awaits. —Wendy Ruopp

Seared Salmon with Sugar Snap-Fennel Slaw
Recipe on next page.

PETER ARDITO STYLING KAREN GILLINGHAM WITH CAROLYN CASNER, FOOD) JOANNE PALMISANO (PROPS

SEARED SALMON WITH SUGAR SNAP-FENNEL SLAW

ACTIVE: 35 MIN **TOTAL:** 35 MIN

The light and summery snap pea-and-fennel slaw makes a crisp bed for seared salmon (or any firm fish). The delicate fennel fronds add more mild licorice flavor to the dish. (Photograph: page 21)

- ¼ cup lemon juice
- 3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil, divided
- 2 tablespoons minced shallot
- ½ teaspoon light brown sugar
- ¾ teaspoon salt, divided
- ½ teaspoon freshly ground pepper, divided
- 1 large fennel bulb, with fronds
- 2 cups sugar snap peas, trimmed
- 1¼ pounds wild Alaskan salmon, skinned
- 2 teaspoons minced fresh chives

1. Combine lemon juice, 2½ tablespoons oil, shallot, brown sugar, ½ teaspoon salt and ¼ teaspoon pepper in a large bowl. Set aside 4 teaspoons of the dressing in a small bowl.
2. Slice top off fennel bulb. Chop 2 tablespoons of the fronds and add to the large bowl. (Reserve remaining fronds for garnish.) Halve, core and thinly slice the bulb. Thinly slice snap peas into long matchsticks. Toss the fennel and peas with the dressing in the large bowl; let stand while you cook the salmon.
3. Cut salmon into 4 portions and season with the remaining ¼ teaspoon each salt and pepper. Heat the remaining ½ tablespoon oil in a large nonstick skillet over medium-high heat. Add the salmon and cook for 2 minutes. Gently turn and continue cooking until just opaque in the center, 2 to 4 minutes more.
4. Divide the slaw and salmon among 4 plates. Drizzle each portion with 1 teaspoon of the reserved dressing and top with ½ teaspoon chives and fennel fronds, if desired.

SERVES 4: 4 OZ. SALMON & 1 CUP SLAW EACH
Calories 308, **Fat** 16g (sat 3g), **Cholesterol** 66mg, **Carbs** 10g, **Total sugars** 3g (added 1g), **Protein** 30g, **Fiber** 3g, **Sodium** 539mg, **Potassium** 889mg

NO PANINI MAKER? To make panini on the stovetop, heat 1 teaspoon oil in a large nonstick skillet over medium heat. Place 2 sandwiches in the pan. Place a medium skillet on top and add four 15-ounce cans to weight it down. Cook the sandwiches, turning once, until golden brown, 2 to 3 minutes per side. Repeat with the remaining sandwiches.

KALE & GRUYÈRE PANINI

ACTIVE: 45 MIN **TOTAL:** 45 MIN
TO MAKE AHEAD: Prepare filling up to 2 days ahead, refrigerate until ready to use.
EQUIPMENT: Panini maker (*or see Tip, below*)

Layers of sautéed kale, garden-fresh tomatoes and a fine melting cheese fill this vegetarian panini. For the best flavor, we like the complexity of aged Gruyère or fontina, but use any cheese you have on hand.

- 1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 small onion, finely chopped
- 3 tablespoons balsamic vinegar
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 8 cups chopped kale
- ¼ cup water
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- 8 slices country bread (¼ inch thick), preferably whole-wheat
- Olive oil cooking spray
- 1 cup shredded Gruyère *or* fontina cheese
- 1 medium tomato, cut into 8 thin slices

1. Heat oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Add onion and cook, stirring frequently, until golden brown, 5 to 7 minutes. Add vinegar and cook until almost evaporated, about 1 minute. Add garlic and cook, stirring, until fragrant, about 30 seconds. Add kale, water and salt (the pan will be full). Stir, cover and cook, stirring occasionally, until the kale is wilted and the water has evaporated, about 5 minutes. Remove from heat.
2. To prepare panini: Preheat panini maker to high. Coat one side of each slice of bread with cooking spray. With the sprayed side down, spread the kale mixture on 4 slices of bread (about ½ cup per sandwich). Top each with ¼ cup cheese and 2 slices tomato. Top with the remaining bread, sprayed-side up. Press in the panini maker until crispy, 3 to 5 minutes.

SERVES 4: 1 PANINI EACH
Calories 407, **Fat** 17g (sat 6g), **Cholesterol** 30mg, **Carbs** 45g, **Total sugars** 8g (added 4g), **Protein** 23g, **Fiber** 8g, **Sodium** 537mg, **Potassium** 942mg

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SPICY PORK & CHEDDAR EMPANADAS

MAKES ABOUT 3 DOZEN APPETIZER-SIZE EMPANADAS

INGREDIENTS

- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1/4 cup chopped onions
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1/2 pound lean ground pork
- 1 cup canned petite diced tomatoes with green chilies
- 2 teaspoons ground cumin
- 1 teaspoon dried oregano or thyme leaves, crumbled
- Salt to taste
- 1 box ready-made pie crust rounds
- 4 ounces Cabot Seriously Sharp Cheddar or Cabot Sharp Cheddar, grated (about 1 cup)
- 1 large egg, lightly beaten with 1 tablespoon water

DIRECTIONS

1. In large skillet, heat oil over medium-high heat; add onions and cook, stirring, until tender, about 4 minutes. Add garlic and stir for about 30 seconds longer.
2. Add pork and cook, breaking up with spoon, until fully cooked. Add tomatoes, cumin and oregano or thyme and cook, stirring occasionally, until juices have nearly evaporated. Remove from heat, taste mixture and season with salt if needed. Let cool to room temperature.
3. Place rack in upper third of oven and preheat oven to 425°F.
4. Take crust rounds out of package and let sit until softened. Scatter cheese evenly over one round. Place second round on top; press gently down; on lightly floured surface, roll pastry out into thin layer, about 1/16-inch thick.
5. With 3-inch cutter or inverted glass, cut circles from dough. Press scraps together, then reroll dough and cut out more circles.
6. Place about 2 teaspoons filling on half of each circle; moisten half of edge with water, fold dough over filling and press together to seal. Brush tops with egg mixture and place on baking sheets.
7. Bake for 8 to 10 minutes or until golden. Serve hot.

NUTRITION ANALYSIS: Calories 71, Total Fat 4g, Saturated Fat 1.5g, Cholesterol 12mg, Sodium 70mg, Carbohydrates 5g, Dietary Fiber 0.5g, Protein 3g, Calcium 29mg

For more recipes, visit: cabotcheese.coop

ROASTED PORK TENDERLOIN WITH RHUBARB BBQ SAUCE

ACTIVE: 25 MIN **TOTAL:** 40 MIN

TO MAKE AHEAD: Cover and refrigerate the sauce (Step 2) for up to 3 days or freeze for up to 3 months.

When rhubarb first sprouts up in the spring we rush to bake it into pies, crumbles and cakes, but we're also fond of using it in savory ways like this tangy barbecue sauce. If you're lucky enough to have a lot of rhubarb, make a double or even triple batch of the sauce and freeze it for later in the summer. It tastes great with grilled chicken and beef too.

- 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil, divided
- 1 small onion, chopped
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 2 cups sliced rhubarb, fresh or frozen (thawed)
- ¼ cup ketchup
- ¼ cup packed light brown sugar
- 1 tablespoon cider vinegar
- 2 teaspoons Worcestershire sauce
- ½ teaspoon freshly ground pepper, divided
- 1 1-pound pork tenderloin, trimmed
- ¼ teaspoon salt

1. Preheat oven to 425°F

2. Heat 1 tablespoon oil in a large saucepan over medium heat. Add onion and garlic and cook, stirring, until starting to soften, about 2 minutes. Add rhubarb, ketchup, brown sugar, vinegar, Worcestershire and ¼ teaspoon pepper; stir to combine. Bring to a simmer and cook, stirring, until the onion and rhubarb are soft, about 10 minutes. Cover and remove from heat.

3. Meanwhile, heat the remaining 1 tablespoon oil in a large ovenproof skillet over medium-high heat. Sprinkle pork with salt and the remaining ¼ teaspoon pepper; add to the skillet and cook until browned on all sides, about 4 minutes.

4. Transfer the skillet to the oven. Roast the pork until an instant-read thermometer inserted into the thickest part registers 145°F, 12 to 15 minutes. Transfer the pork to a clean cutting board and let rest for 5 minutes. Slice and serve with the sauce.

SERVES 4: 3 OZ. PORK & ¼ CUP SAUCE EACH
Calories 288, **Fat** 10g (sat 2g), **Cholesterol** 74mg, **Carbs** 25g, **Total sugars** 19g (added 16g), **Protein** 25g, **Fiber** 2g, **Sodium** 395mg, **Potassium** 775mg.

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BED BATH & BEYOND®

SUMMER VEGETABLE PASTA WITH CRISPY GOAT CHEESE MEDALLIONS

ACTIVE: 40 MIN **TOTAL:** 40 MIN

This vegetarian pasta dish is loaded with the best of late-spring/early-summer vegetables—sweet spring onions, tangy cherry tomatoes and plenty of baby spinach. And the crisped goat cheese medallions on top are restaurant-worthy yet super-simple to make with just a minute or two under the broiler.

- 8 ounces whole-wheat bow-tie pasta
- 1½ tablespoons chopped fresh dill
- 1½ tablespoons panko-style breadcrumbs
- 4 ounces goat cheese
- Olive oil cooking spray
- 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- 3 spring onion bulbs, halved and thinly sliced, *or* 2 cups thinly sliced small onions
- 1½ pints cherry tomatoes, halved (3 cups)
- 2 cloves garlic, sliced
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ¼ teaspoon freshly ground pepper
- 6 cups baby spinach

1. Position rack in upper third of oven, preheat broiler. Line a small baking sheet with foil.

2. Cook pasta according to package directions. Drain, reserving ½ cup of the cooking water.

3. Meanwhile combine dill and panko in a small bowl. Divide goat cheese into 4 portions; shape each into a 1-inch-wide disk. Coat the disks in the panko, lightly patting the mixture onto the cheese to help it stick. Place on the prepared baking sheet and lightly coat the tops with cooking spray. Set aside.

4. Heat oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Add onions and cook, stirring, until lightly browned, 5 to 6 minutes. Add tomatoes, garlic, salt and pepper; cook until the tomatoes release their juice, 1 to 2 minutes. Stir in the reserved ½ cup water, scraping up any browned bits. Stir in spinach and the pasta; remove from heat.

5. Broil the goat cheese rounds, watching closely, until light brown and crispy on top, 1 to 2 minutes. Serve each portion of pasta topped with a goat cheese medallion.

SERVES 4: 1¾ CUPS EACH

Calories 387 **Fat** 15g (sat 5g), **Cholesterol** 13mg **Carbs** 53g, **Total sugars** 6g (added 0g), **Protein** 17g, **Fiber** 8g, **Sodium** 452mg, **Potassium** 739mg

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SMOKED TROUT, POTATO & ARUGULA SALAD

ACTIVE: 30 MIN **TOTAL:** 30 MIN

Tender new potatoes and baby arugula are a dynamic duo, adding creamy texture and peppery flavor to the smokiness of the trout in this sophisticated dinner salad. You can hard-boil the eggs ahead of time, but if you cook them while you steam your potatoes, they'll still be a little warm when you serve the salad, which makes it extra special.

- 12 ounces baby (new) yellow potatoes or fingerlings, scrubbed
- 2 tablespoons capers, rinsed, divided
- ¼ cup reduced-fat sour cream
- 3 tablespoons white-wine vinegar
- 3 tablespoons chopped fresh dill
- 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 tablespoon minced shallot
- ½ teaspoon freshly ground pepper
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- 6 cups packed baby arugula
- 4 hard-boiled eggs *(see Tip, right)*, chopped
- 4 ounces smoked trout, skinned, boned and flaked (about ¾ cup)

1. Place a steamer basket in a large saucepan with 1 inch of water; bring to a boil. Place the potatoes in the basket, cover and steam until barely tender when pierced with a skewer, 13 to 15 minutes, depending on size.

2. Meanwhile, chop 1 tablespoon capers and place in a large bowl. Add sour cream, vinegar, dill, oil, shallot, pepper and salt. Whisk to combine.

3. When the potatoes are cool enough to handle but still warm, halve them (or quarter if large) and add to the bowl along with arugula, eggs and trout. Toss gently until just combined. Serve the salad topped with the remaining 1 tablespoon capers.

SERVES 4: ABOUT 1½ CUPS EACH
Calories 294, **Fat** 17g (sat 5g), **Cholesterol** 200mg, **Carbs** 19g, **Total sugars** 2g (added 0g), **Protein** 17g, **Fiber** 2g, **Sodium** 572mg, **Potassium** 572mg

TO HARD BOIL EGGS: Place in a single layer in a saucepan; cover with water. Bring to a simmer over medium-high heat. Reduce heat; cook at lowest simmer for 10 minutes. Drain and cover with ice-cold water. Peel when cool.

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IN SEASON

CHERRIES

The Cordial Cherry

Don't eat that last cherry in the bag—save a few for these sweet and savory summer dishes!

Sweet cherries are here, and because most are grown along the lengthy West Coast the season lasts from mid-May in California to the end of the harvest in Washington in August. Intensely flavorful and juicy, cherries are not a hard sell. But their long list of powerful nutrients seals the deal: they're rich in anthocyanins (potent antioxidants with anti-inflammatory properties) and boast plenty of blood-pressure-reducing potassium. They often grow in pairs, because multiple flowers bloom from a single bud and when they fruit, the cherries stay together. And these heart-shaped treats really are magical culinary partners when you match them with other foods. Try them in a refreshing cherry lemonade or combined with nutty farro in a hearty summer salad. Or wrap sweetened cherries and creamy ricotta in store-bought crêpes for an easy-to-make blintz. Whether you eat them straight from the bag or tuck them into delightful dishes, with cherries, it's always a pleasure. —**Breana Lai, M.P.H., R.D.**

NOEL BARNHURST

FRISÉE SALAD WITH CHERRIES & BLUE CHEESE

ACTIVE: 35 MIN **TOTAL:** 35 MIN

Sweet cherries, blue cheese and salty prosciutto balance each bite in this salad. If you can't find frisée, curly endive is a good alternative.

- 1 teaspoon extra-virgin olive oil plus 2 tablespoons, divided
- 4 thin slices prosciutto
- 2 cups sweet cherries, pitted and halved, divided
- 2 tablespoons raspberry vinegar
- 1 tablespoon chopped shallot
- 1 tablespoon chopped fresh tarragon
- ½ teaspoon sugar
- ⅛ teaspoon salt
- 8 cups torn frisée or curly endive
- ⅓ cup crumbled blue cheese

1. Heat 1 teaspoon oil in a large nonstick skillet over medium-high heat. Add prosciutto and cook, turning once or twice, until crispy, about 2 minutes. Transfer to a paper-towel-lined plate. Break each slice into 3 "crisps."

2. Place the remaining 2 tablespoons oil, ½ cup cherries, vinegar, shallot, tarragon, sugar and salt in a blender; puree until smooth

3. Toss frisée (or endive) in a large bowl with the remaining cherries and the dressing. Divide the salad among 6 plates. Top each salad with a scant 1 tablespoon blue cheese and 2 prosciutto crisps.

SERVES 6: 1⅓ CUPS EACH

Calories 144, **Fat** 9g (sat 3g), **Cholesterol** 13mg, **Carbs** 12g, **Total sugars** 7g (added 0g), **Protein** 6g, **Fiber** 3g, **Sodium** 423mg, **Potassium** 353mg.

FRESH CHERRY LEMONADE

ACTIVE: 15 MIN **TOTAL:** 15 MIN

TO MAKE AHEAD: Cover and refrigerate for up to 2 days; stir before serving.

If you like, add a splash of vodka, bourbon or rum to transform this thirst-quenching pink lemonade into a refreshing summer cocktail.

- 2 cups sweet cherries, pitted, plus whole cherries for garnish
- ½ cup lemon juice
- ⅓ cup sugar
- 2½ cups cold water
- Lemon slices for garnish

Combine cherries, lemon juice and sugar in a blender. Puree until smooth. Strain through a fine sieve into a pitcher. Stir in water. Serve over ice, garnished with lemon and cherries.

SERVES 4: 1 CUP EACH

Calories 124, **Fat** 0g (sat 0g), **Cholesterol** 0mg, **Carbs** 32g, **Total sugars** 29g (added 17g), **Protein** 0g, **Fiber** 0g, **Sodium** 11mg, **Potassium** 191mg.

PETE ANDOLSTYLING: KAREN GILLINGHAM WITH CAYLA CYNTHIA SWEEN (FOOD) JOANNE FALCONE SANSONE (PROPS) SEE PAGE TOP BEAUTY

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EDITOR'S PICK "This hand-held cherry pitter from OXO was my best friend while creating these cherry recipes. I pitted more than 20 pounds of cherries! Easy to use and to clean, it's also great for pitting olives." —*Carolyn Casner, Recipe Developer*

CHERRY-RICOTTA BLINTZES

ACTIVE: 30 MIN **TOTAL:** 40 MIN

TO MAKE AHEAD: Cover and refrigerate cherry and cheese fillings (Steps 2 & 3) in separate containers for up to 1 day.

Ready-made crêpes—available near the berries in most produce departments—keep these blintzes easy enough for a weeknight dessert.

- 3 cups sweet cherries, pitted
- ¼ cup water
- 3 tablespoons granulated sugar
- 2 teaspoons cornstarch
- ¾ cup part-skim ricotta cheese
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1 teaspoon lemon zest
- 6 9-inch ready-to-use crêpes
- 2 teaspoons melted butter
- Confectioners' sugar for garnish

1. Preheat oven to 375°F. Coat a rimmed baking sheet with cooking spray.

2. Combine cherries, water, granulated sugar and cornstarch in a saucepan. Cook over medium heat, stirring, until thickened, 6 to 8 minutes.

3. Meanwhile, combine ricotta, vanilla and lemon zest in a small bow

4. Transfer a crêpe to a work surface, keeping it on its piece of plastic from the package. Spread about 2 tablespoons of the ricotta mixture into a 3-inch-long strip on the lower third of the crêpe. Top with a generous 1 tablespoon of the cherry mixture. Fold both sides of the crêpe over the filling and roll closed. Repeat with the remaining crêpes and fillings (saving enough cherry mixture for topping). Transfer to the prepared baking sheet. Brush the tops with melted butter.

5. Bake the blintzes until lightly browned, 5 to 7 minutes. To serve, top each with about 2 tablespoons of the remaining cherry filling. Sprinkle with confectioners' sugar, if desired.

SERVES 6. 1 BLINTZ EACH

Calories 184 **Fat** 5g (sat 3g), **Cholesterol** 19mg, **Carbs** 30g, **Total sugars** 20g (added 7g), **Protein** 5g, **Fiber** 2g, **Sodium** 118mg, **Potassium** 212mg

CHERRY-ALMOND FARRO SALAD

ACTIVE: 25 MIN **TOTAL:** 40 MIN

TO MAKE AHEAD: Cover and refrigerate for up to 1 day.

Tossed with a minty vinaigrette, this farro and cherry salad can be served as a light lunch or as a side dish along with grilled chicken, duck or pork. Look for farro—a high-fiber whole grain that is an ancestor of modern wheat—with other whole grains in well-stocked supermarkets and natural-foods stores.

- 1 cup farro, rinsed
- 2 cups water
- ½ teaspoon salt, divided
- ¼ cup white balsamic vinegar
- 3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- ¼ teaspoon freshly ground pepper
- 2 cups sweet cherries, pitted and halved
- ½ cup diced ricotta salata or feta cheese
- ¼ cup slivered almonds, toasted
- 3 tablespoons finely diced red onion
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh mint

1. Combine farro, water and ¼ teaspoon salt in a medium saucepan. Bring to a boil over high heat. Reduce heat to maintain a gentle simmer, cover and cook until the farro is tender, 20 to 30 minutes. Drain any remaining liquid and fluff with a fork. Spread the farro out on a large rimmed baking sheet to cool for 10 minutes.

2. Meanwhile, whisk vinegar, oil, pepper and the remaining ¼ teaspoon salt in a large bowl. Add cherries, ricotta salata (or feta), almonds, onion, mint and the farro. Gently stir to combine.

SERVES 6: ABOUT ¾ CUP EACH

Calories 277 **Fat** 13g (sat 3g), **Cholesterol** 11mg, **Carbs** 36g, **Total sugars** 10g (added 0g), **Protein** 7g, **Fiber** 4g, **Sodium** 339mg, **Potassium** 183mg

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A great dip is the kind of nibble that makes entertaining easy. These four take just a few minutes to make with healthy and easy-to-find ingredients—many of which you might already have on hand. Just a little chopping, layering, stirring or pulsing and you're ready to party.

Chop 2 peaches, 1 cup cherry tomatoes, 1 fresh jalapeño, 3 tablespoons fresh basil and 2 tablespoons red onion. Combine with 1 tablespoon lime juice, ½ teaspoon brown sugar and ¼ teaspoon salt.

¼ CUP EACH

WATERCRESS & SPRING ONION RAITA

Stir together 1 cup nonfat plain yogurt, ½ cup grated cucumber, ½ cup chopped watercress, 2 tablespoons minced spring onion (or scallions), 1 tablespoon olive oil and ½ teaspoon each cumin, coriander and salt. Serve drizzled with olive oil, if desired.

SERVES 6:
¼ CUP EACH

For complete nutrition information, turn to the recipe index on page 90.

MIDDLE EASTERN LAYERED DIP

Layer 8 ounces hummus in a shallow dish with 1 cup nonfat plain Greek yogurt, 1 cup chopped cucumber, 1 chopped tomato, ⅓ cup each sliced olives and feta cheese. Sprinkle with 1 teaspoon each dried oregano and ground sumac (optional).

SERVES 16
¼ CUP EACH

QUICK ROMESCO DIP

Pulse 12 ounces rinsed roasted red peppers, ⅓ cup toasted slivered almonds, 3 tablespoons fresh parsley, 2 tablespoons olive oil, 1 tablespoon sherry vinegar, 1 garlic clove, ¼ teaspoon pepper and ⅛ teaspoon salt in a food processor until finely chopped.

SERVES 6.
¼ CUP EACH

KAREN KRASNE, STYLING; KAREN CUNNINGHAM FOOD; KIM WONG PROPS

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MARKET PICK

CHICKEN BREAST

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Smart Shopping for Chicken

Sodium Watch Chicken breast is naturally low in sodium—about 44 milligrams per 3-ounce serving. But some chicken is "plumped" or "enhanced"—a process where saltwater, broth or other sodium-rich additives are injected into the meat to make it more tender. This practice can jack up the sodium significantly. Avoid plumped chicken by checking the package and skipping any that lists a percentage of anything other than water on the label.

[illegible] The USDA regulates terms like "certified organic" and "free-range" to ensure certain standards have been met. "Free-range" means the chickens have access to the outdoors. "Organic" meets this standard *plus* the birds have been fed an all-organic diet and haven't been given any antibiotics. "Certified Humane" means the chickens were raised with a higher standard of care. "No antibiotics added" ensures that the chickens were never given antibiotics.

Labels That Lack Many labels are not useful because they're not regulated or they're misleading. For instance, "hormone-free" doesn't mean much because the USDA prohibits hormone use in poultry. The definition of "farm-raised" is loose and could include a factory operation or a small farm. And "all-natural" does not guarantee anything about how the chickens were raised, treated or what they were fed.

—Hilary Meyer

PETER ARDITO STYLING KAREN GILLINGHAM WITH BREANA LAI FOOD JOANNE PALM SAND PROPS

QUICK CHICKEN BRACIOLE

ACTIVE: 45 MIN **TOTAL:** 45 MIN
EQUIPMENT: Kitchen string

Classic Italian braciole (pronounced "brajole") is made with beef and homemade marinara sauce. Here, we roll pounded chicken breast around a flavorful chard, prosciutto and mozzarella filling, then simmer the rolls in store-bought sauce, to keep it simple. Serve with whole-wheat fettuccine tossed with parsley or with polenta.

- 2 cups prepared low-sodium marinara sauce
- 2 8-ounce boneless, skinless chicken breasts, trimmed
- 4 thin slices prosciutto
- 1 cup finely chopped chard leaves (without stems)
- ½ cup shredded part-skim mozzarella
- ¼ teaspoon freshly ground pepper

1. Add sauce to a large skillet, cover and place over medium heat to start warming.
2. Cut a horizontal slit along the long, thin edge of each chicken breast, cutting nearly through to the opposite side. Open each so it forms two flaps, hinged at the center. Cover with a large piece of plastic wrap and pound with the smooth side of a meat mallet or a heavy saucepan to an even ¼-inch thickness. Layer 2 slices of prosciutto, ½ cup chard and ¼ cup mozzarella on each breast. Starting from a long side, roll closed. Tie the ends with kitchen string and tuck them in to keep the filling from falling out. Sprinkle each roll with pepper.
3. Add the rolls to the warm sauce, cover and simmer, turning occasionally, until an instant-read thermometer inserted into the center of the rolls registers 165°F, about 15 minutes. Transfer to a clean cutting board and let rest 5 minutes. Remove the string and slice the rolls crosswise. Serve with the sauce.

SERVES 4: ½ ROLL & ½ CUP SAUCE EACH
Calories 236, **Fat** 8g (sat 3g), **Cholesterol** 81mg, **Carbs** 8g, **Total sugars** 5g (added 0g), **Protein** 32g, **Fiber** 1g, **Sodium** 636mg, **Potassium** 249mg.

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CHICKEN CLUB WRAPS

ACTIVE: 30 MIN **TOTAL:** 30 MIN

This quick recipe puts all the elements of a grilled chicken club sandwich into a wrap. Serve with extra napkins.

- 1 pound boneless, skinless chicken breast, trimmed
- ½ teaspoon freshly ground pepper, divided
- 3 tablespoons nonfat plain Greek yogurt
- 3 tablespoons cider vinegar
- 3 tablespoons minced onion
- 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- ⅛ teaspoon salt
- 1 medium tomato, chopped
- 1 avocado, chopped
- 3 strips cooked bacon, crumbled
- 8 large leaves red- *or* green-leaf lettuce
- 4 10-inch flour tortillas, preferably whole-wheat

1. Preheat grill to medium-high.

2. Sprinkle chicken on both sides with ¼ teaspoon pepper. Oil the grill rack (*see Tip, below*). Grill the chicken, turning once or twice, until an instant-read thermometer inserted into the thickest part registers 165°F, 15 to 18 minutes. Transfer to a clean cutting board and let cool for about 5 minutes.

3. Meanwhile, whisk yogurt, vinegar, onion, oil, salt and the remaining ¼ teaspoon pepper in a large bowl. Chop the chicken into bite-size pieces and add to the bowl along with tomato, avocado and bacon; toss to combine.

4. To assemble the wraps, place 2 lettuce leaves on each tortilla and top with chicken salad (about 1 cup each). Roll up like a burrito. Serve cut in half, if desired.

SERVES 4: 1 WRAP EACH

Calories 526, **Fat** 26g (sat 5g), **Cholesterol** 70mg, **Carbs** 39g, **Total sugars** 4g (added 0g), **Protein** 34g, **Fiber** 11g, **Sodium** 901mg, **Potassium** 587mg.

TIP: Oiling a grill rack helps keep grilled food from sticking. Oil a folded paper towel, hold it with tongs and rub it over the hot rack.

THAI CHICKEN STIR-FRY WITH BASIL & CASHEWS

ACTIVE: 30 MIN **TOTAL:** 30 MIN

This quick chicken and zucchini stir-fry is flavored with classic Thai ingredients: savory fish sauce balanced with tangy lime juice and plenty of fresh basil. Have all the elements prepped and ready to add to the wok before you turn on the heat. Serve with brown rice.

- 2 tablespoons peanut *or* canola oil, divided
- 1 pound boneless, skinless chicken breast, trimmed, cut into 1-inch pieces
- 3 scallions, cut into 1-inch pieces
- 2 small fresh red chiles, thinly sliced (optional)
- 2 cloves garlic, thinly sliced
- 1 large zucchini, quartered lengthwise and sliced into ½-inch pieces
- 2 tablespoons fish sauce
- 2 teaspoons lime juice
- 2 teaspoons molasses
- 2 teaspoons cornstarch
- ½ cup toasted cashews
- ¼ cup slivered fresh basil, preferably Thai

1. Heat 1 tablespoon oil in a large, flat-bottom, carbon-steel wok or large skillet over medium-high heat. Add chicken and cook, stirring occasionally, until just cooked through, 4 to 5 minutes. Transfer to a plate.

2. Add the remaining 1 tablespoon oil, scallions and chiles (if using); cook, stirring, until the scallions start to soften, about 30 seconds. Add garlic and zucchini and cook, stirring, until the zucchini is just tender, about 3 minutes.

3. Meanwhile, whisk fish sauce, lime juice, molasses and cornstarch in a small bowl. Stir the sauce and the chicken (along with any accumulated juice) into the pan; cook, gently stirring, until the sauce is bubbling and thickened, 30 seconds to 1 minute. Remove from the heat and stir in cashews and basil.

SERVES 4: 1¼ CUPS EACH

Calories 329 **Fat** 18g (sat 4g) **Cholesterol** 63mg, **Carbs** 16g, **Total sugars** 6g (added 2g), **Protein** 28g, **Fiber** 2g, **Sodium** 664mg, **Potassium** 649mg.

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CRISPY CHICKEN SCHNITZEL WITH HERB-BROWN BUTTER

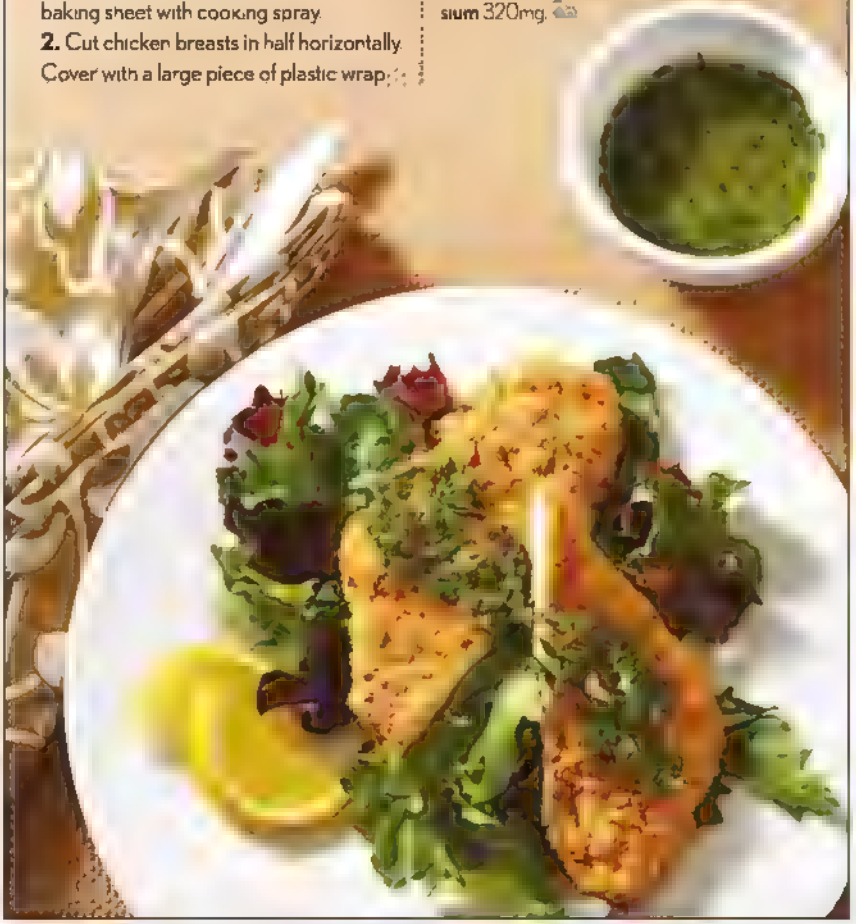
ACTIVE: 30 MIN **TOTAL:** 30 MIN

Schnitzel—a crispy breaded chicken, veal or pork cutlet—gets its name from German-speaking countries, but is found in cuisines worldwide. Our chicken schnitzel is coated with fresh whole-wheat breadcrumbs and oven "fried" using a mist of olive oil cooking spray. Serve on a bed of mixed greens or with mashed potatoes.

- 2 8-ounce boneless, skinless chicken breasts, trimmed
- ½ teaspoon salt, divided
- ½ teaspoon freshly ground pepper, divided
- ¼ cup white whole-wheat flour
- 2 large eggs, beaten
- 1 lemon
- 2 cups fresh whole-wheat breadcrumbs
- Olive oil cooking spray
- 2 tablespoons butter
- 1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 small shallot, minced
- ¼ cup chopped fresh herbs, such as dill, parsley and chives

1. Preheat oven to 450°F. Coat a large baking sheet with cooking spray.
2. Cut chicken breasts in half horizontally. Cover with a large piece of plastic wrap and pound with the smooth side of a meat mallet or a heavy saucepan to an even ¼-inch thickness. Sprinkle the chicken with ¼ teaspoon each salt and pepper.
3. Place flour in one shallow dish and eggs in another. Zest lemon and combine the zest with breadcrumbs in a third shallow dish. (Slice the lemon for serving; set aside.) Coat both sides of the chicken in the flour, shaking off any excess, then dip in egg. Coat on both sides with the breadcrumbs, pressing to help them stick. Place the chicken on the prepared baking sheet. Coat on both sides with cooking spray.
4. Bake the chicken until golden brown and no longer pink in the center, 10 to 12 minutes.
5. Meanwhile, melt butter in a small saucepan over medium-high heat. Cook until just beginning to brown, about 2 minutes. Add oil and shallot; cook for 30 seconds more. Remove from heat; add herbs and the remaining ¼ teaspoon each salt and pepper. Serve the chicken with the herb sauce and lemon slices.

SERVES 4: 1 CUTLET & 1 TBSP. SAUCE EACH
Calories 313, **Fat** 15g (sat 6g), **Cholesterol** 140mg, **Carbs** 15g, **Total sugars** 2g (added 1g), **Protein** 29g, **Fiber** 2g, **Sodium** 472mg, **Potassium** 320mg.



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WEEK 1

KICK-START CLEANSE

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+ Replace all three meals with an Almased shake. (See recipe at right.)
+ Between meals, have as much vegetable broth as you like. You can also substitute 100% vegetable juice (low-sodium) for the broth.

WEEK 2

FAT-BURNING STAGE

This week, you'll start to torch pounds as you return to solid food. By starting and ending your day with Almased, you'll keep your nutrients up and calories down. Enjoy a solid midday meal of vegetables, lean protein, and healthy fat to sustain your energy.

BREAKFAST
One Almased shake.

LUNCH
Cooked or raw veggies with 3–4 oz. lean protein (fish, chicken, or tofu). Try chilled salmon over greens or a piece of chicken with steamed broccoli. (Find more recipes at bikini-plan.com.)

DINNER
One Almased shake.

ALMASED SHAKE

- 8 Tbsp. of Almased
- 10–12 oz. of water, low-fat milk, or unsweetened almond or soy milk
- 1 tsp. of oil (flaxseed, walnut, or olive)
- 1 tsp. of cinnamon or unsweetened cocoa powder (optional)

Blend and serve.

DIY VEGGIE BROTH

Cut up 1 lb. of fresh vegetables and sauté lightly in a stockpot. (Try broccoli, leeks, onions, cabbage, and spinach). Add 4 pints of water and simmer until the vegetables are soft, or transfer to a Crock Pot to cook. Strain, discard solid vegetables, season broth with herbs and spices, and enjoy! Broth can be stored in the fridge for a few days.

WEEK 3 & BEYOND

SUSTAINED WEIGHT LOSS

Depending on your weight loss goals, you may want to continue on the Week 2 plan until you reach your goal weight—or incorporate Almased into your regular diet. It's up to you! Try it for:

+ **BREAKFAST ON THE GO**
  You can't beat Almased for an energizing—and quick—morning meal.
+ **A LIGHT MIDDAY MEAL**
  If you've got a big dinner ahead, keep things light by having a healthy breakfast and then enjoying an Almased shake at lunch.
+ **AN AFTERNOON LIFT**
  Skip the cookies and coffee and whip up an Almased shake when you're feeling low on energy.
+ **A PRE- OR POST-WORKOUT BOOST**
  Fuel your body with half a serving of Almased before you exercise and have the second half after to help you recover.
+ **A LATE-NIGHT SNACK**
  Resist the urge to overindulge in sweets by having a cocoa Almased shake an hour or two before bedtime. (Just add 1 tsp. of unsweetened cocoa powder.)
+ **A VEGETARIAN PROTEIN SUPPLEMENT**
  Getting enough high-quality protein can be a challenge for vegetarians. Almased is a healthy meal supplement if you are going meat-free.

LOOK AT ME NOW!

Catarsha Atkins

"In 2008, after I made the decision to stop smoking cigarettes and while facing other stressful factors in my life, such as divorce, I instantly went from 140 lbs to a whopping 210 lbs overnight. I was suffering from high blood pressure, high cholesterol and pre-diabetes. I started working out and seeking other ways to improve my health and lifestyle. In 2010, I visited a holistic wellness center, where I found out about Almased. I was skeptical but I decided to give "this stuff" a try. Boy was I impressed! After the first week of following the Almased Diet and working out every other day, I was down 4 lbs. The pounds continually disappeared and today, I am at 135 lbs and healthy! No diabetes and no high blood pressure! I went from a size 16 to a size 6 in the course of a year and the weight has stayed off. I brag about Almased to anyone who will listen now. I love my yellow can!"

WHERE CAN I FIND ALMASED?

Go to almased.com or visit your local health food store, GNC or the Vitamin Shoppe.

GOT A QUESTION?

Call us toll-free at 1-877-ALMASED (1-877-256-2733) or visit us at almased.com.

DOWNLOAD YOUR FREE FIGURE PLAN GUIDE

for more detailed information on the Almased diet and recipe ideas at figureplan.com. Enter Source Code: EWC

PLUG-IN PARTY

BY CAROLYN MALCOUN ~ PHOTOGRAPHY BY LEIGH BEISCH

Cookout season is here and we've got the secret weapon for making it stress-free and totally delicious... the slow cooker!

I've discovered how to make casual summer entertaining super-easy and infinitely more fun: I simply plug in my slow cooker. I used to spend all day making side dishes and sweating for hours at the grill, not realizing until the end of the party that the only time I interacted with anyone was when they came to get a burger from me.

Now I let my slow cooker do most of the work. If I'm having what feels like the whole neighborhood over, I can free up space on my packed grill by using this handy tool to make one of the main courses. Who doesn't love fork-tender brisket piled on a sandwich and topped with pickles and garlicky mayo or chicken drumsticks coated in sticky honey-orange sauce? I can also use the slow cooker to prepare great sides like a tangy, warm German potato salad starring fresh fingerling potatoes or Quinoa-Summer Squash Casserole.

My slow cooker also comes in handy when I need to bring a dish to someone else's party. When I arrive, I plug it back in and use the "warm" function to conveniently hold the food until it's time to eat. The crock transfers right to the buffet table, which means no extra serving dishes to wash, so cleanup is a snap.

Summer entertaining has never been so easy. I may just have to get a second slow cooker and ditch my grill altogether.

CAROLYN MALCOUN *is a former* EatingWell *editor who develops recipes and writes from her home in Brunswick, Maine.*

Slow-Cooker Baked Beans and Slow-Cooker Brisket Sandwiches with Quick Pickles (page 54)

GERMAN POTATO SALAD

ACTIVE: 20 MIN
SLOW-COOKER TIME: 5 HRS ON LOW
EQUIPMENT: 5- to 6-quart slow cooker

Vinegary German-style potato salads are a lighter alternative to the typical mayo-coated variety. This one tastes great when served warm or at room temperature. Fingerling potatoes make it especially pretty, but any type of yellow-flesh potato cut into 1-inch pieces will work.

- 4 slices bacon
- ⅓ cup cider vinegar
- 3 tablespoons whole-grain mustard
- 2 tablespoons all-purpose flour
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon freshly ground pepper
- 3 pounds fingerling potatoes, halved lengthwise (or quartered, if large)
- 2 cups sliced celery
- 1 medium sweet onion, chopped
- ¼ cup chopped fresh dill

1. Cook bacon in a large skillet over medium heat, turning occasionally, until crispy, about 8 minutes. Transfer to a paper-towel-lined plate to cool, reserving the drippings. Crumble the cooled bacon and refrigerate until ready to serve.

2. Discard all but 2 tablespoons of the drippings. Off the heat, add vinegar to the pan. When it stops steaming, scrape up any browned bits. Whisk mustard and flour in a small bowl; add the vinegar mixture and whisk until combined. Whisk in salt and pepper.

3. Combine potatoes, celery, onion and the dressing in a 5- to 6-quart slow cooker; stir until the vegetables are well coated. Cover and cook on Low for 5 hours.

4. To serve, stir in dill and the bacon.

SERVES 16: ½ CUP EACH
Calories 91, **Fat** 1g (sat 0g) **Cholesterol** 2mg **Carbs** 17g, **Total sugars** 1g (added 0g), **Protein** 3g **Fiber** 1g, **Sodium** 172mg, **Potassium** 415mg

THE RIGHT-SIZE COOKER

Most recipes call for a specific slow-cooker size (5- to 6-quart is the most common). Using a different size may affect your results; most slow cookers need to be at least half full and no more than three-quarters full to properly cook the food.

HONEY-ORANGE CHICKEN DRUMSTICKS

ACTIVE: 45 MIN **SLOW-COOKER TIME:** 2-3 HRS ON HIGH OR 4 HRS ON LOW
EQUIPMENT: 5- to 6-quart slow cooker

Looking for an alternative to standard tomato-based barbecued chicken? Kids and adults alike will devour these drumsticks doused in a honey-sweetened sauce spiked with orange, ginger and garlic.

- ⅓ cup honey
- 2 teaspoons orange zest
- 2 tablespoons orange juice
- 3 tablespoons reduced-sodium soy sauce or tamari
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 1½ tablespoons minced fresh ginger
- 1 tablespoon rice vinegar
- ¼ teaspoon crushed red pepper
- 12 medium chicken drumsticks (3-3½ pounds), skin removed *(see Tip, page 91)*
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh cilantro
- 2 teaspoons toasted sesame seeds

1. Combine honey, orange zest, orange juice, soy sauce (or tamari), garlic, ginger, vinegar and crushed red pepper in a small bowl.

2. Coat a 5- to 6-quart slow cooker with cooking spray. Add drumsticks, pour in the sauce and mix to coat. Cover and cook until an instant-read thermometer registers 165°F when inserted into the thickest part of the meat without touching bone, 2 to 3 hours on High or 4 hours on Low.

3. Transfer the drumsticks to a bowl. Very carefully pour the liquid from the slow cooker into a medium skillet. Bring to a boil over high heat. Boil until reduced and syrupy, 10 to 15 minutes. Pour the sauce over the drumsticks and stir to coat. Serve sprinkled with cilantro and sesame seeds.

SERVES 6: 2 DRUMSTICKS EACH
Calories 245, **Fat** 7g (sat 2g) **Cholesterol** 150mg, **Carbs** 18g **Total sugars** 16g (added 15g) **Protein** 28g, **Fiber** 0g, **Sodium** 404mg **Potassium** 362mg

BEYOND SOUPS & STEWS

If you reserve your slow cooker just for soups and stews, think again. For summertime cookout fare like chicken drumsticks and thighs or beef short ribs, just add a little flavorful liquid (about ½ cup is all most cookers need to work properly) and cook for 2 to 3 hours on High.

PLUG-IN PARTY

QUINOA-SUMMER SQUASH CASSEROLE

ACTIVE: 30 MIN
SLOW-COOKER TIME: 4 HRS ON LOW
EQUIPMENT: 5- to 6-quart slow cooker

As this layered casserole cooks, the liquid from the tangy tomatillo salsa and summer squash is absorbed by the quinoa, adding tons of flavor to the final dish.

- 12 ounces tomatillos, husked, rinsed and chopped
- 1 pint cherry tomatoes, chopped
- 1 poblano *or* bell pepper, chopped
- ½ cup finely chopped white onion
- 1 tablespoon lime juice
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 cup quinoa
- 1 cup crumbled cotija *or* feta cheese, divided
- 2 pounds small yellow summer squash, cut into ¼-inch slices
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh oregano

1. Combine tomatillos, tomatoes, pepper, onion, lime juice and salt in a medium bowl.

2. Coat a 5- to 6-quart slow cooker with cooking spray. Layer quinoa, ⅓ cup cheese and all of the squash in the slow cooker. Top with another ⅓ cup cheese. Spread the tomatillo mixture on top; but don't stir the ingredients together. (Refrigerate the remaining cheese to use for the topping.)

3. Cover and cook on Low for 4 hours. Serve sprinkled with oregano and the remaining ⅓ cup cheese.

SERVES 10: ABOUT ¾ CUP EACH
Calories 111, **Fat** 3g (sat 1g), **Cholesterol** 3mg, **Carbs** 18g, **Total sugars** 6g (added 0g), **Protein** 5g, **Fiber** 3g, **Sodium** 286mg, **Potassium** 526mg

VEGETARIAN PINTO BEAN SLOPPY JOES

ACTIVE 30 MIN **SLOW-COOKER TIME**
[illegible] (NOT IN[illegible]
TO MAKE AHEAD: [illegible] over and refrigerate up to 2 days. Reheat before serving.
EQUIPMENT: [illegible] slow cooker
Move over, meaty. The beans are [illegible]

- 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- 2 medium carrots, sliced
- 1 large white onion, sliced
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 2 tablespoons chili powder
- 2 tablespoons balsamic vinegar
- 1 cup dry pinto beans, soaked (see tip, page 91)
- 1 large red bell pepper, diced
- 1 8-ounce can no-salt-added tomato sauce
- 1 cup water
- 2 tablespoons reduced-sodium soy sauce or tamari
- 2 tablespoons tomato paste
- 4 cups very thinly sliced green cabbage
- 1 medium zucchini, chopped
- 1 cup corn, fresh or frozen (thawed)
- 3 tablespoons honey mustard
- 1 tablespoon brown sugar
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 10 whole-wheat hamburger buns

1. [illegible] skillet over medium-high [illegible] dering [illegible] pour 8 [illegible] ook [illegible] ed bits [illegible] cook- spray. Drain and rinse the soaked beans [illegible] transfer to the slow cooker. [illegible] pepper, tomato sauce, water, soy sauce (or tamari) and tomato paste to combine. Spread the carrot-onion mixture over the bean mixture, but don't stir the two together. (The layer on top helps keep the beans submerged during cooking so they don't dry out.) Cover and cook on High for 5 hours or Low for [illegible] hours.
3. Stir in cabbage, zucchini, corn, honey mustard, brown sugar and salt; cook on High for 30 minutes.
4. Serve the mixture on buns.

SERVES 10: ABOUT ⅔ CUP & 1 BUN EACH
Calories 283, **Fat** 6g (sat 1g), **Cholesterol** 0mg, **Carbs** 51g, **Total sugars** 13g (added 6g), **Protein** 11g, **Fiber** 11g, **Sodium** 692mg, **Potassium** 773mg

THE BEAN-TOPPING TRICK

It takes 5 to 9 hours to fully cook beans in a slow cooker. For the best results, spread a layer of sautéed diced onions and/or vegetables over the beans before turning on the slow cooker. That keeps the beans submerged in liquid so they become tender and don't dry out.

SLOW-COOKER BRISKET SANDWICHES WITH QUICK PICKLES

ACTIVE: 1 HR **SLOW-COOKER TIME:** 6 HRS ON HIGH OR 9 HRS ON LOW

TO MAKE AHEAD: Cover and refrigerate the pickles (Step 3) and garlic mayo (Step 4) for up to 2 days.

EQUIPMENT: 6-quart slow cooker

Rauchbier, a smoky German beer, gives this fork-tender brisket real pit-barbecue flavor, but you can use any beer that suits your taste, or even broth, to achieve mouthwatering results. Quick pickles and a schmear of garlic mayo top off the sandwiches. (Photograph, page 48.)

BRISKET

- 2 tablespoons smoked paprika
- 2 teaspoons kosher salt
- 1 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1 teaspoon onion powder
- 1 teaspoon coarsely ground pepper
- 3¼ pounds brisket *(see Tip, page 91)*, trimmed
- 1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 16-ounce bottle rauchbier (smoked beer) or 2 cups reduced-sodium beef broth

QUICK PICKLES

- ½ cup white vinegar
- ½ cup cider vinegar
- 2 tablespoons light brown sugar
- 1 teaspoon pickling spice
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt
- 2 pickling or mini cucumbers, sliced
- 1 medium sweet onion, thinly sliced into rings

GARLIC MAYO

- 2 cloves garlic, chopped
- ½ teaspoon kosher salt
- ½ cup low-fat mayonnaise

- 8 whole-wheat buns

1. To prepare brisket: Combine paprika, salt, garlic powder, onion powder and pepper in a small bowl. Rub all over brisket. Heat oil in a large, heavy skillet over medium heat. Add the brisket and brown on both sides, 3 to 5 minutes per side. Transfer to a 6-quart slow cooker.

2. Add beer (or broth) to the pan along with any remaining spice blend from your cutting board; increase heat to high. Cook for 5 minutes, scraping up browned bits with a wooden spoon. Pour over the brisket. Cover and cook on High for 6 hours or Low for 9 hours.

3. To prepare pickles: Meanwhile, combine white vinegar, cider vinegar and brown sugar in a small saucepan; bring to a boil over high heat and cook for 1 minute. Add pickling spice and 1 teaspoon salt. Pour into a large, heatproof glass bowl and add cucumbers and onion. Refrigerate, stirring occasionally, for at least 1 hour or until ready to serve.

4. To prepare garlic mayo: Mash garlic and ½ teaspoon salt into a paste in a mortar and pestle or with the back of a spoon on a cutting board. Combine the garlic mixture with mayonnaise in a small bowl. Cover and refrigerate until ready to serve.

5. When the brisket is done, transfer to a clean cutting board and let rest for 10 minutes.

6. Pull the brisket apart into shreds with 2 forks and then coarsely chop the shredded meat. Combine the chopped brisket with the liquid in the slow cooker.

7. To serve, drain the pickled vegetables. Spread each bun with 1 tablespoon garlic mayo and top with about ¾ cup brisket and ½ cup pickles.

SERVES 8: 1 SANDWICH EACH

Calories 401, **Fat** 13g (sat 3g), **Cholesterol** 91mg, **Carbs** 34g, **Total sugars** 7g (added 4g), **Protein** 34g, **Fiber** 5g, **Sodium** 768mg, **Potassium** 513mg.

PARTY WINES UNDER $10
Stock up on these budget-friendly wines for easy drinking all summer long.
Casal Garcia Vinho Verde
Portugal ($5.99)
With a touch of bubbles, crisp and dry Vinho Verde elevates any party.
Hugues Beaulieu Picpoul de Pinet
France ($9.99)
Laurent Miquel Pere et Fils Rosé
France ($9.99)
Served cold, this fruity rosé is the ultimate refreshing summer porch sipper.
is big and bold value wine.
Shenandoah Special Reserve Zinfandel
California ($9.99)
Zinfandel complements BBQ and grilled meat perfectly with flavors of blackberry and

SLOW-COOKER BAKED BEANS

ACTIVE: 15 MIN **SLOW-COOKER TIME:** 6 HRS ON HIGH OR 8 HRS ON LOW (NOT INCLUDING BEAN-SOAKING TIME)

TO MAKE AHEAD: Cover and refrigerate for up to 3 days or freeze for up to 3 months; reheat before serving.

EQUIPMENT: 5- to 6-quart slow cooker

This classic version of baked beans is spiked with bourbon, maple syrup and molasses, plus just the right amount of bacon to add a salty touch of smokiness. It's a must-have dish for any backyard barbecue. Come to eatingwell.com/webextra *to see a video of how to make this recipe.*

- 1 large sweet or yellow onion, diced
- 4 slices bacon, cut into 1-inch pieces
- 3 tablespoons bourbon or low-sodium chicken broth
- 1 pound dry navy beans or great northern beans, soaked *(see Tip, page 91)*
- 3 cups low-sodium chicken broth
- ½ cup ketchup
- ¼ cup pure maple syrup or light brown sugar
- 2 tablespoons molasses
- 1 teaspoon dry mustard
- ¼ teaspoon ground chipotle pepper or hot chili powder
- 1 tablespoon cider vinegar
- ¾ teaspoon salt

1. Cook onion and bacon in a large skillet over medium-high heat until the onion is starting to brown, 6 to 8 minutes. Reduce heat to medium-low and continuing cooking until the onion is very soft, about 5 minutes more. Stir in bourbon (or 3 tablespoons broth) and cook for 1 minute, scraping up the browned bits. Set aside.

2. Drain and rinse the soaked beans, transfer to a 5- to 6-quart slow cooker. Stir in 3 cups broth, ketchup, maple syrup (or brown sugar), molasses, dry mustard and chipotle (or chili powder). Spoon the onion-bacon mixture on top of the bean mixture, but don't stir the two together. (The layer on top helps keep the beans submerged during cooking so they don't dry out). Cover and cook on High for 6 hours or Low for 8 hours. Stir in vinegar and salt just before serving.

SERVES 12: ABOUT ½ CUP EACH

Calories 200, **Fat** 2g (sat 0g), **Cholesterol** 2mg, **Carbs** 35g, **Total sugars** 11g (added 9g), **Protein** 10g, **Fiber** 9g, **Sodium** 307mg, **Potassium** 535mg.

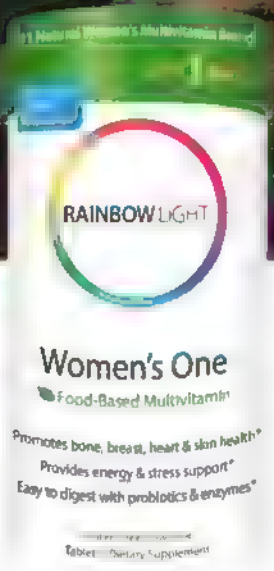
EDITOR'S PICK "I like to keep a firm grip on my wine at all times—not always easy when dining al fresco. These shatterproof Govino tumblers (made of a BPA-free polymer)—with finger notches—are party savers." –*Wendy Ruopp*, Managing Editor

STYLING (PAGES 48-49): DAN BECKER/FOOD; GLENN JENKINS/PROPS; THIS PAGE: COURTESY GOVINO LLC

GAME CHANGER

Anna Cummins
Co-founder 5 Gyres,
activist, surfer, mother

LIFE CHANGER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Learn how Anna and Rainbow Light are working to end plastic pollution. **Visit rainbowlight.com/gamechanger**

Cakes in Celebration

For graduations, birthdays and all your big moments, here are three light and luscious cakes that are as easy to make as they are lovely

Recipes by Nick Malgieri ~ Photography by Carin Krasner

icture a wedding without a wedding cake. A birthday party without a birthday cake. There's something missing. Now picture that moment when the lights dim, the crowd sings and a cake with swirls of frosting and the glow of candles makes its way to the table to be bestowed upon that special someone. Cakes make that magic moment of every great celebration. And the one sure way to really amplify the "oohs" and "aahs" is to bake a cake from scratch.

So we turned to Nick Malgieri, award-winning cookbook author and director of the baking programs at the Institute of Culinary Education in New York City. His uncomplicated approach to cakes is a reason in itself to celebrate. If you can handle a spatula and an electric mixer, you can make one of these three cakes. They all start with a vanilla sponge cake that's so delicious, you may be tempted to eat it on its own. But if you can resist, you'll use it as the base for these cakes that highlight some of the finest seasonal fruits. In one you'll find aromatic apricots whirled into a Bavarian cream. The freeform trifle cake brims with ripe peaches and raspberries. And in the Berry Chantilly Cake, you get plenty of juicy sweet-tart berries nestled in generous layers of whipped cream frosting.

Sure, it's easier to buy a fancy cake at a patisserie. But if you have the time and something to celebrate, make one of these irresistible beauties. After all, there's no better way to show someone how much you love them than by baking them a homemade cake.

—Hilary Meyer

APRICOT BAVARIAN CREAM CAKE

ACTIVE: 1¾ HRS **TOTAL:** 2 HRS (PLUS 1½ HRS TO BAKE & COOL CAKE, 8 HRS CHILLING TIME)
TO MAKE AHEAD: Prepare syrup (Step 2) and apricot puree (Step 3), cover and refrigerate separately for up to 3 days. Assemble the cake through Step 8 up to 2 days ahead. Unmold and decorate up to 4 hours before serving.
EQUIPMENT: 10-inch springform pan

A silky-smooth Bavarian-style apricot cream envelops the golden sponge cake for a truly spectacular dessert. The cream is set with gelatin to make it firm enough to hold its shape when unmolded, but the texture is more like a delicate mousse.

Hot Milk Sponge Cake *(page 60)*

SYRUP
- ⅓ cup water
- ¼ cup sugar
- 3 tablespoons white rum *or* 3 tablespoons water plus ½ teaspoon almond extract
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract

APRICOT PUREE & APRICOT CREAM
- 2 pounds ripe apricots, halved and pitted
- 1 cup sugar
- 1 cup apricot nectar *or* water, divided
- 2 envelopes unflavored gelatin (4½ teaspoons)
- 1 cup heavy cream
- 1 cup nonfat vanilla Greek yogurt

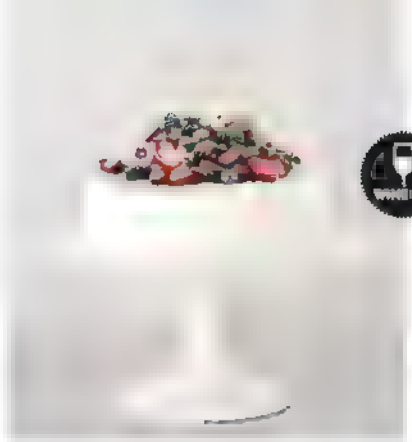
OPTIONAL GARNISH
- 4 ripe apricots, pitted and cut into wedges
- White chocolate curls *(see Tip, right)*

1. Bake cake and let cool completely.
2. To prepare syrup: Combine ⅓ cup water and ¼ cup sugar in a small saucepan; bring to a boil, stirring to dissolve the sugar. Pour into a small heatproof bowl and cool for 15 minutes. Stir in rum (or water-almond extract mixture) and vanilla. Set aside.
3. To prepare apricot puree: Combine apricots, 1 cup sugar and ½ cup apricot nectar (or water) in a large saucepan; bring to a boil over medium heat. Reduce heat to a simmer, cover and cook, stirring occasionally, until the apricots have completely disintegrated, 25 to 30 minutes. Let cool for 15 minutes. Transfer to a blender or food processor and process until smooth. Pour into a large bowl and let cool to room temperature. (Or loosely cover and refrigerate for up to 3 days. If refrigerated, let stand at room temperature for 2 hours before continuing.)
4. To prepare apricot cream: Pour the remaining ½ cup apricot nectar (or water) into a small heatproof glass bowl and sprinkle with gelatin; let stand until the gelatin is softened, about 3 minutes. Microwave uncovered, on High, until the gelatin is dissolved but the liquid is not boiling, 20 to 40 seconds. *(Alternatively, heat 1 inch of water in a small skillet over medium-low heat; set the bowl in the pan and stir until the gelatin is dissolved.)* Whisk 1 cup of the apricot puree into the dissolved gelatin to cool it, then whisk that mixture into the remaining puree.
5. Beat heavy cream with an electric mixer in a medium bowl until firm peaks form. Fold in yogurt. Gently fold the yogurt-cream into the apricot mixture with a whisk.
6. To assemble cake: Coat the bottom and sides of a 10-inch springform pan with cooking spray.
7. Using a large serrated knife, trim off the very top of each cake layer so the tops are flat. Brush the top of each layer with half of the reserved syrup. *(See page 61.)* Place one layer in the center of the prepared springform pan. Pour half the apricot cream over the layer; use an offset spatula to spread the apricot cream over the top and down the sides of the cake. Quickly center the second layer on top. Pour the remaining apricot cream over the cake until it reaches the top of the pan; you may have a little left. *(See page 61.)* Use the offset spatula to spread the cream evenly over the top. The pan should be very full, but not overflowing.
8. Refrigerate the cake until the apricot cream is firm, about 1 hour. Loosely cover with plastic wrap and continue chilling until completely set, about 7 more hours.
9. To serve: Run a thin paring knife between the cake and the side of the pan to loosen. Remove the side of the pan. Use 2 wide, sturdy spatulas to slide the cake off the pan bottom and onto a serving plate.
10. To decorate: Smooth any lines on the sides of the cake with the back of a spoon, if desired. Decorate the top with apricot wedges and white chocolate curls, if desired.

SERVES 14

Calories 339 **Fat** 11g (sat 6g), **Cholesterol** 70mg, **Carbs** 54g, **Total sugars** 42g (added 32g), **Protein** 6g, **Fiber** 2g, **Sodium** 141mg, **Potassium** 266mg

Decorate your cake like a pro by adding some lovely delicate curls of white chocolate. Start by microwaving a block of white chocolate on low power (20%), in 15-second bursts, until barely softened but not warmed. Use a vegetable peeler to shave the chocolate into curls.



Domaine de Vodanis Vouvray Brut, *France* ($19.99). This 100% Chenin Blanc sparkler has just a hint of honey sweetness.

Henkell Trocken Dry Sec, *Germany* ($8.99). Budget-friendly, this sparkling wine bursts with flavors of citrus and vanilla.

BERRY CHANTILLY CAKE

ACTIVE: 30 MIN **TOTAL:** 30 MIN (PLUS 1½ HRS TO BAKE & COOL CAKE)

TO MAKE AHEAD: Frost cake up to 2 hours ahead. Top with berries before serving

Fresh berries are layered with whipped cream and delicate sponge cake for a summery sweet that's as well suited for a bridal shower as it is for a special birthday. Fill and top with any combination of fresh berries available in your area.

Hot Milk Sponge Cake *(page 60)*
- 4 cups mixed fresh berries
- 1½ cups heavy cream
- 2 tablespoons granulated sugar
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract *or* vanilla bean paste
- 1¼ cups nonfat vanilla Greek yogurt
- 1 teaspoon confectioners' sugar for garnish

1. Bake cake and let cool completely

2. Wash berries and thoroughly pat dry. Halve any large berries. Gently combine in a bowl.

3. Whip cream in a medium bowl with an electric mixer until starting to thicken. Add sugar and vanilla extract (or paste) and continue whipping until stiff peaks form. Gently fold in yogurt.

4. Place one cake layer on a platter and spread 1 cup of the cream mixture on top. Spread half the berries over the cream, to within ½ inch of the edge. Top with the second cake layer.

5. Using an offset spatula, fill the gap between the two layers with cream mixture so the sides are flush. Spread the top and sides of the cake with the remaining cream mixture. (*See page 61.*) Spoon the remaining berries on the top, mounding them slightly in the center. Dust with confectioners' sugar just before serving, if desired.

SERVES 12

Calories 337 **Fat** 17g (sat 10g), **Cholesterol** 99mg, **Carbs** 41g, **Total sugars** 25g (added 19g), **Protein** 7g, **Fiber** 2g, **Sodium** 172mg, **Potassium** 165mg.

RASPBERRY-PEACH TRIFLE CAKE

ACTIVE: 1¾ HRS **TOTAL:** 3¾ HRS (PLUS 1½ HRS TO BAKE & COOL CAKE)

TO MAKE AHEAD: Prepare peaches and syrup (Step 2) and custard (Step 3) and refrigerate separately for up to 1 day. Whisk custard until smooth before assembling the cake.

Lightly poached peaches, fresh raspberries and creamy vanilla custard fill the layers in this trifle-inspired cake. The rustic style of the cake makes for a less refined slice; for neater portions, you can assemble two shorter cakes instead.

Hot Milk Sponge Cake *(page 60)*

PEACHES
- 4 cups water
- ½ cup sugar
- 2 vanilla beans
- 2½ pounds firm ripe peaches (4–5 large), halved and pitted

CUSTARD
- 2 cups reduced-fat milk, divided
- ⅓ cup sugar
- ¼ cup cornstarch
- 4 large egg yolks
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract

TOPPING
- ¾ cup heavy cream
- 1 tablespoon sugar
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract *or* vanilla bean paste
- 2 cups fresh raspberries

1. Bake cake and let cool completely

2. To prepare peaches. Bring water, ½ cup sugar and vanilla beans to a boil in a large pot. Add peaches and return to a boil, then remove from heat. Place a plate on top of the peaches to submerge them in the syrup; let stand while you prepare the custard.

3. To prepare custard: Combine 1½ cups milk and ⅓ cup sugar in a medium nonreactive saucepan. Whisk cornstarch and the remaining ½ cup milk in a medium bowl until smooth, then whisk in egg yolks. Place the saucepan over medium-low heat and heat until steaming. Whisk a third of the steaming milk into the yolk mixture. Bring the remaining milk to a boil over medium heat. As soon as it boils, start whisking and add the yolk mixture all at once while constantly whisking. Continue cooking, whisking constantly, until the custard thickens and starts to bubble, about 2 minutes. Remove from heat and whisk in 2 teaspoons vanilla extract. Scrape the custard into a nonreactive bowl (*see Tip, page 73*) and press a piece of plastic wrap directly on the surface. Refrigerate until cold, at least 2 hours.

4. When the peaches have cooled, remove from the syrup with a slotted spoon and peel. Return the peaches to the syrup and refrigerate while the custard chills.

5. When you're ready to assemble the cake, use the slotted spoon to transfer the peaches to a paper-towel-covered baking sheet to drain. Bring the peach syrup to a boil over high heat; boil until reduced by half, 6 to 10 minutes. Carefully pour the syrup into a heatproof bowl to cool. Slice the peaches into ¼-inch-thick slices.

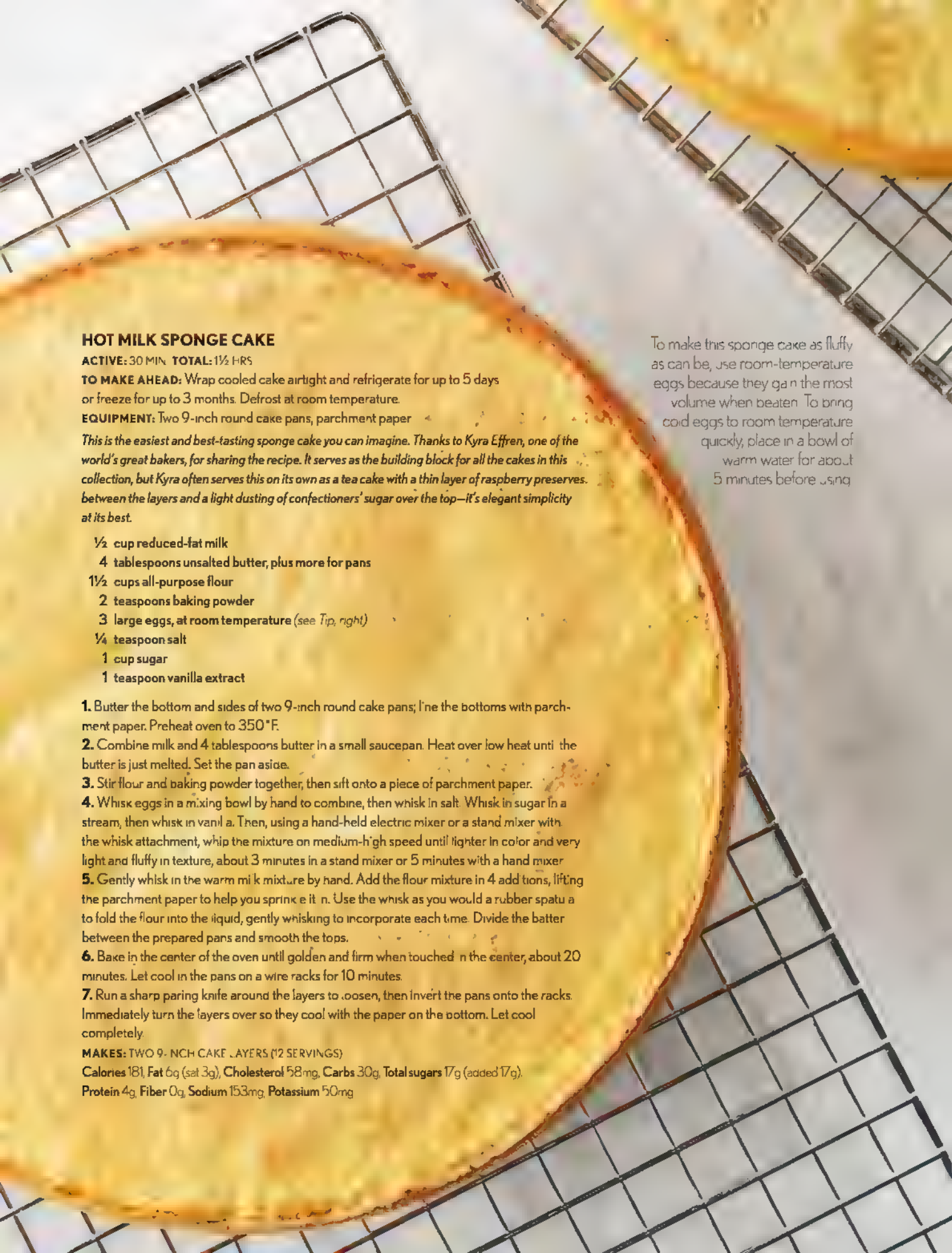
6. To prepare topping: Whip cream in a medium bowl with 1 tablespoon sugar and vanilla extract (or paste) until soft peaks form.

7. To assemble cake: Using a large serrated knife, cut each cake layer in half horizontally so you have 4 very thin layers of cake. (*See page 61.*) Place one layer cut-side-up on a serving platter. Brush with ¼ cup of the peach syrup. Spread on one-third of the custard and top with one-fourth of the sliced peaches and ½ cup raspberries. (*See page 61.*) Repeat with two more cake layers, with the same amounts of syrup, custard and peaches and raspberries. Place the final layer, cut-side up, on top and brush with ¼ cup of the syrup. Top with the whipped cream and the remaining peaches and ½ cup raspberries.

SERVES 12

Calories 374 **Fat** 14g (sat 8g), **Cholesterol** 143mg, **Carbs** 57g, **Total sugars** 39g (added 28g), **Protein** 7g, **Fiber** 3g, **Sodium** 182mg, **Potassium** 337mg.

STYLING: ELIZABETH COLLINS; FOOD: KIM WONG-PROPS:



HOT MILK SPONGE CAKE

ACTIVE: 30 MIN **TOTAL:** 1½ HRS

TO MAKE AHEAD: Wrap cooled cake airtight and refrigerate for up to 5 days or freeze for up to 3 months. Defrost at room temperature.

EQUIPMENT: Two 9-inch round cake pans, parchment paper

This is the easiest and best-tasting sponge cake you can imagine. Thanks to Kyra Effren, one of the world's great bakers, for sharing the recipe. It serves as the building block for all the cakes in this collection, but Kyra often serves this on its own as a tea cake with a thin layer of raspberry preserves between the layers and a light dusting of confectioners' sugar over the top—it's elegant simplicity at its best.

- ½ cup reduced-fat milk
- 4 tablespoons unsalted butter, plus more for pans
- 1½ cups all-purpose flour
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- 3 large eggs, at room temperature *(see Tip, right)*
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- 1 cup sugar
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract

1. Butter the bottom and sides of two 9-inch round cake pans; line the bottoms with parchment paper. Preheat oven to 350°F.

2. Combine milk and 4 tablespoons butter in a small saucepan. Heat over low heat until the butter is just melted. Set the pan aside.

3. Stir flour and baking powder together, then sift onto a piece of parchment paper.

4. Whisk eggs in a mixing bowl by hand to combine, then whisk in salt. Whisk in sugar in a stream, then whisk in vanilla. Then, using a hand-held electric mixer or a stand mixer with the whisk attachment, whip the mixture on medium-high speed until lighter in color and very light and fluffy in texture, about 3 minutes in a stand mixer or 5 minutes with a hand mixer.

5. Gently whisk in the warm milk mixture by hand. Add the flour mixture in 4 additions, lifting the parchment paper to help you sprinkle it in. Use the whisk as you would a rubber spatula to fold the flour into the liquid, gently whisking to incorporate each time. Divide the batter between the prepared pans and smooth the tops.

6. Bake in the center of the oven until golden and firm when touched in the center, about 20 minutes. Let cool in the pans on a wire racks for 10 minutes.

7. Run a sharp paring knife around the layers to loosen, then invert the pans onto the racks. Immediately turn the layers over so they cool with the paper on the bottom. Let cool completely.

MAKES: TWO 9-INCH CAKE LAYERS (12 SERVINGS)

Calories 181, **Fat** 6g (sat 3g), **Cholesterol** 58mg, **Carbs** 30g, **Total sugars** 17g (added 17g), **Protein** 4g, **Fiber** 0g, **Sodium** 153mg, **Potassium** 50mg

To make this sponge cake as fluffy as can be, use room-temperature eggs because they gain the most volume when beaten. To bring cold eggs to room temperature quickly, place in a bowl of warm water for about 5 minutes before using.

Piece of Cake!

TRIFLE CAKE (page 59)

1 To cut cake layers in half horizontally, use a large serrated knife and cut just 1 inch into the cake (not all the way through), turning the cake until it's cut all the way around. Using that cut as a guide, cut the rest of the way through the cake with a gentle sawing motion.

2 For a level cake, evenly spread the custard over each layer and then arrange the fruit as uniformly as possible before the next layer is stacked on top.

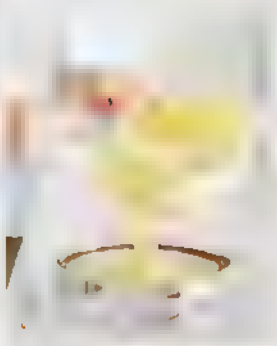
1

2

BERRY CHANTILLY CAKE (page 59)

To frost a fruit-filled cake, start by filling in the gap between the layers with frosting, using an offset spatula, until the sides are flush. If there are any berries showing through, gently push them toward the middle. Spread the remaining frosting over the top and around the sides. Be generous with the frosting at the edges to prevent the cake layers from showing through, giving you a snow-white finish.

2

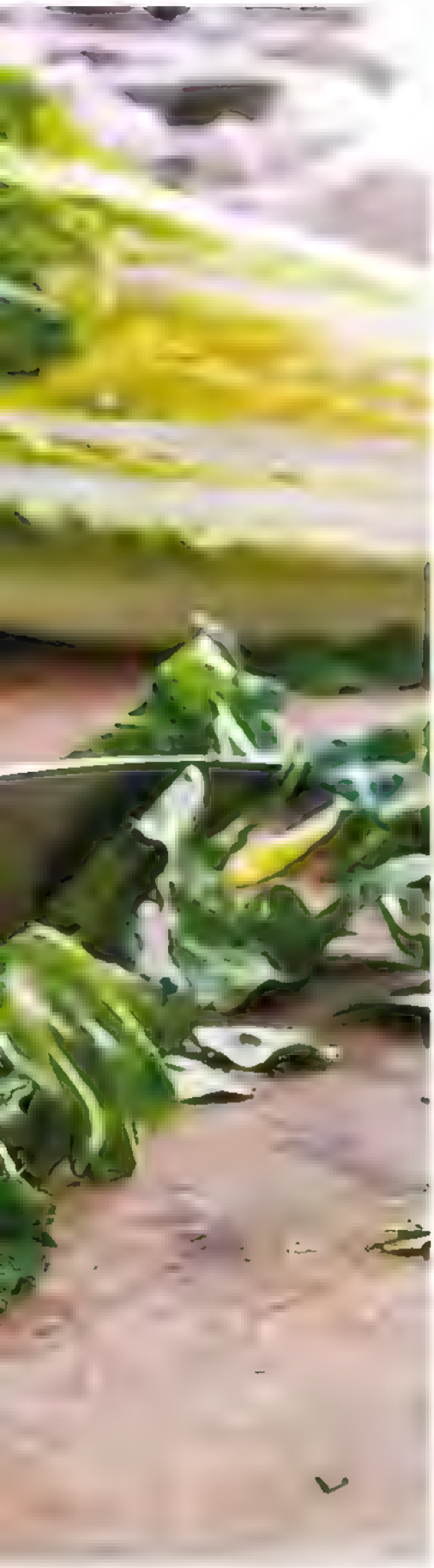


APRICOT BAVARIAN CREAM CAKE (page 58)

1 To create a surface that will readily absorb the flavorful soaking syrup, shave off the very top of each layer of sponge cake with a serrated knife.

2 To apply the syrup to the cake layers, use a pastry brush to evenly moisten the surface, brushing on enough to hydrate the cake without making it wet.

3 Carefully center the first layer in the springform pan; cover with cream mixture. Place the second layer in the exact middle, then pour in the rest of the cream.

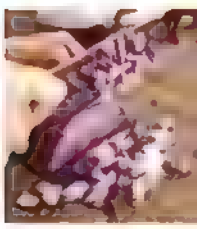


CHOPPED

Get out the knife and cutting board for crazy-good summer salads for every occasion

ossed" is the word most often associated with putting a great salad together. Some perfectly enjoyable jumbles of greens and veggies come out of this technique. Then there's the "composed" salad, a more thoughtful work of art: leaves and sprigs carefully arranged with slivers of vegetables and painterly drizzles of dressing.

But the "chopped" salad is perhaps the most satisfying creation that can grace a wooden bowl. With a sharp knife you can cut lettuces, cucumbers, cabbage, grilled chicken—anything you want—into a mingling of delectable morsels. Coat it with dressing and the whole thing becomes infused with flavor. When you take a bite, the real beauty of the chopped salad sinks in: each forkful has a snippet of all the ingredients. You get the perfect bite of salad, every time.



PERSIAN CUCUMBER SALAD WITH LENTILS & SPROUTS

ACTIVE: 40 MIN **TOTAL:** 40 MIN

Quick-pickling adds bright flavor to this cucumber and lentil salad, perfect for a simple lunch or as part of a larger meal. We like French green lentils for this salad because they hold their shape well when cooked. Look for them in natural-foods stores and well-stocked supermarkets.

- ½ cup champagne vinegar or rice vinegar
- ¼ cup water
- 1 dried hot chile, such as red Thai or chile de arbol, torn
- 1 teaspoon sugar
- ¾ teaspoon kosher salt, divided
- ½ teaspoon dill seed
- 2 cups halved and sliced unpeeled small cucumbers, preferably Persian or "mini"
- 2 tablespoons golden raisins
- A few sprigs fresh dill
- ¼ cup nonfat plain Greek yogurt
- 1½ tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- Freshly ground pepper to taste
- 1 cup cooked French green lentils
- ⅓ cup crumbled feta cheese
- 4 radishes, halved and thinly sliced
- 2 scallions, thinly sliced
- 3 tablespoons coarsely chopped fresh herbs, such as parsley, dill and cilantro
- ½ cup microgreens or mixed sprouts

1. Combine vinegar, water, chile, sugar, ½ teaspoon salt and dill seed in a small saucepan. Bring to a boil, then simmer for 2 minutes. Let cool slightly

2. Place cucumbers and raisins in a shallow bowl or glass dish along with dill sprigs. Carefully pour on the hot liquid. Refrigerate, stirring once or twice, for 20 minutes. Strain (reserving the pickling liquid); discard the chile and dill sprigs. Transfer 2 tablespoons of the liquid to a large bowl. (Reserve the remaining pickling liquid to pickle more vegetables or to use in a salad dressing, if desired.)

3. Whisk the 2 tablespoons pickling liquid with yogurt, oil, pepper and the remaining ¼ teaspoon salt. Add the cucumber mixture, lentils, feta, radishes, scallions and herbs, gently toss to combine. Garnish with microgreens (or sprouts).

SERVES 4: ABOUT 1 CUP EACH

Calories 179 **Fat** 9g (sat 3g), **Cholesterol** 12mg, **Carbs** 19g, **Total sugars** 6g (added 0g), **Protein** 8g, **Fiber** 4g, **Sodium** 213mg, **Potassium** 348mg.

MICROGREENS deliver a big nutrient punch despite their itty-bitty size. One study found they boast more nutrients, like vitamin C and E, than their mature counterparts.

STYLING: ROSSA VERDINA M. FOOD STYLING: VIVA LA DIVA EVENTS. PROPS:

GRILLED CHICKEN & NECTARINE CHOPPED SALAD

ACTIVE: 45 MIN **TOTAL:** 45 MIN

For a different presentation, arrange the ingredients for this main-course chicken and nectarine salad separately on a large serving platter instead of combining them in a large bowl. Toss with the dressing just before serving.

- 2 ripe nectarines, halved and pitted
- 3 teaspoons extra-virgin olive oil plus ¼ cup, divided
- 1 pound boneless, skinless chicken breast, trimmed
- ½ teaspoon kosher salt, divided
- ¼ teaspoon freshly ground pepper, plus more to taste
- 3 tablespoons red-wine vinegar
- 1½ tablespoons water
- 2 teaspoons Dijon mustard
- 2 teaspoons honey
- 6 cups chopped romaine lettuce
- 2 cups finely chopped radicchio
- 1 cup assorted cherry tomatoes, chopped
- ¾ cup crumbled goat cheese

1. Preheat grill to medium or heat a stovetop grill pan over medium-high heat.
2. Brush nectarine halves lightly with 1 teaspoon oil. Season chicken on both sides with ¼ teaspoon each salt and pepper and brush with 2 teaspoons oil.
3. [illegible]
until cooked through, 12 to 18 minutes total. Grill the nectarines until lightly charred and softened, 2 to 3 minutes per side. Let the chicken and nectarines cool on a clean cutting board for about 10 minutes, then chop into bite-size pieces.
4. Meanwhile, whisk the remaining ¼ cup oil, vinegar, water, mustard, honey and the remaining ¼ teaspoon salt in a large bowl. Add lettuce, radicchio, tomatoes, cheese, the chicken and nectarines; toss well to combine. Season with pepper.

SERVES 5; ABOUT 2 CUPS EACH

Calories 341, Fat 22g (sat 6g), Cholesterol 64mg, Carbs 13g, Total sugars 8g (added 2g), Protein 24g, Fiber 3g, Sodium 302mg, Potassium 562mg.

TINY BUT MIGHTY
sunflower seeds are rich in selenium, which may help lower cancer risk, and contain phytosterols, compounds that can help reduce cholesterol.

DINNERWARE & GLASSES: ANTHROPOLOGIE.COM. NAPKIN: AUNTIEOTI.COM

APPLE, CARROT & CABBAGE CHOPPED SALAD

ACTIVE: 25 MIN **TOTAL:** 25 MIN

Orange blossom water adds an exotic citrus essence to the dressing in this spiced carrot and cabbage salad. If you prefer, you can substitute orange juice, which will give you a similar flavor without the delicate perfumed notes. Look for orange blossom water in natural-foods stores and Middle Eastern grocers.

- 2½ tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 tablespoon orange blossom water or orange juice
- 2 teaspoons white-wine vinegar
- ½ teaspoon kosher salt
- ¼ teaspoon ground cinnamon
- ¼ teaspoon ground cumin
- 3 cups shredded carrots (3-4 medium)
- 1 cup chopped red cabbage
- 1 large crisp red apple, chopped
- 1 cup sunflower sprouts
- ½ cup fresh cilantro leaves
- 3 tablespoons sunflower seeds, lightly toasted
- Freshly ground pepper to taste
- Lime wedges for serving

Whisk oil, orange blossom water (or orange juice), vinegar, salt, cinnamon and cumin in a large bowl. Add carrots, cabbage, apple, sunflower sprouts, cilantro and sunflower seeds; toss to combine with the dressing. Season with pepper. Serve with lime wedges, if desired.

SERVES 6: ABOUT 1⅓ CUPS EACH

Calories 124, **Fat** 8g (sat 1g), **Cholesterol** 0mg, **Carbs** 13g, **Total sugars** 6g (added 0g), **Protein** 2g, **Fiber** 3g, **Sodium** 137mg, **Potassium** 305mg.

AVOCADO & SHRIMP CHOPPED SALAD

ACTIVE: 50 MIN **TOTAL:** 50 MIN

The smoky flavor of grilled shrimp and corn is a tasty match for the creamy cilantro dressing.

DRESSING

- 5 tablespoons reduced-fat sour cream
- 3 tablespoons grapeseed oil or extra-virgin olive oil
- 3 tablespoons cider vinegar
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh cilantro
- 1 tablespoon chopped fresh dill
- 1 tablespoon minced shallot
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- ¾ teaspoon dry mustard
- ¼ teaspoon kosher salt

HEALTHY FATS (avocados, grapeseed oil) and protein (shrimp) give this salad staying power—and for less than 400 calories.

SHRIMP & SALAD

- 1 pound raw shrimp (21-25 per pound), peeled and deveined
- 2 teaspoons extra-virgin olive oil
- 2 teaspoons finely grated lime zest
- ¼ teaspoon kosher salt
- ¼ teaspoon freshly ground pepper, plus more to taste
- 2 ears corn, husked
- 4 cups chopped romaine lettuce
- ¾ cup finely chopped red cabbage
- ¾ cup diced red bell pepper
- ½ cup diced red onion
- ½ cup assorted cherry tomatoes, chopped
- ½ fennel bulb, halved again, thinly sliced
- 1 avocado, diced
- 2 slices crispy cooked bacon, diced

1. Dressing: Puree the dressing ingredients in a food processor or blender until smooth.

2. Shrimp & salad: Preheat grill to medium or heat a grill pan over medium heat.

3. Toss shrimp with 2 teaspoons oil, lime zest, salt and ¼ teaspoon pepper.

4. Grill corn, turning occasionally, until slightly charred, 6 to 10 minutes. Grill the shrimp, turning once, until cooked through, 3 to 5 minutes total. Transfer corn and shrimp to a cutting board. Cut the kernels off the cob. Chop the shrimp into bite-size pieces.

5. Combine lettuce, cabbage, bell pepper, onion, tomatoes, fennel, avocado and bacon in a large bowl. Add the shrimp, corn and dressing; toss to coat. Season with pepper.

SERVES 4: ABOUT 2½ CUPS EACH

Calories 398, **Fat** 25g (sat 5g), **Cholesterol** 171mg, **Carbs** 21g, **Total sugars** 5g (added 0g), **Protein** 26g, **Fiber** 8g, **Sodium** 374mg, **Potassium** 1,058mg.

ROMNEY STEELE *is the author of* Plum Gorgeous *(Andrews McMeel, 2011).*

WIN A SALAD BOWL!
Enter our daily sweepstakes May 1-7 at *eatingwell.com/WinBowl* to win a Petermans Boards & Bowls salad bowl. Details page 91.

PRESERVING TRADITION

WITH APRIL McGREGER

Want to make blow-your-mind pickles and preserves? All you need is one part fresh produce, one part inspiration from canning whiz April McGreger and a nod to the old-school techniques of preserving in the South.

The sunlight streaming through the big window in front of April McGreger's kitchen sink has a tint of early summer green from the trees surrounding her comfortable North Carolina country house. The walls are painted lemon-curd yellow and cool aqua. Ruby strawberries macerating in organic sugar fill a bucket. On the stove, in a wide slant-sided copper pot, more berries in bubbling syrup send out a seductive, summery swirl of intensifying sweet and tang.

McGreger is the owner and culinary force behind award-winning Farmer's Daughter Pickles & Preserves. A tall, strong woman of 37, her thick chestnut hair tucked under a scarlet bandana, she neatly plucks leaves and stems from the next batch of berries to be cooked. She squeezes lemons and sets jars on the counter in preparation. But when the mixture on the stove starts to foam, she drops everything to tend the pot, steadily skimming the froth.

"I started helping my grandmother when I was a kid, and I canned with my mother, who liked to put up sweets—fig preserves and pears. But I loved pickles and sour things, so when I was about 13, I started making pickles for myself. And I fell in love with pickling and also the creativity it afforded me."

Culinary inventiveness is a large part of why home canning has seen an upswing in recent years, particularly among young canners. That creativity is evident in many of McGreger's recent creations, such as her jazzy riffs on traditional themes like Kimchee Bloody Mary Mix, fermented Sweet Potato-Habanero Hot Sauce, Blueberry Lemon Verbena Preserves, Peach with Vanilla Bean and Bourbon Preserves,

By Ronni Lundy

Location photography by JIMMY WILLIAMS // *Food photography by* JIM WESTPHALEN

HAND CRAFTED April McGregor's culinary spunk shines through the products she sells at farmers markets, from inventive hot sauces and Bloody Mary mixes to knockout pickles and preserves. Go to *farmersdaughterbrand.com* to get a taste for yourself.

"When I was young I was around multiple generations, people of many types. I felt the farmers' market would be a great way for my son, Moe, to have a community of people like that."

and Spiced Cherry Preserves, to name a few.

An added appeal for young people, says McGreger, is that canning itself is not as complicated as it looks. The makers of Ball canning jars reported a 31 percent increase in sales in 2012, a rise that's been going on for several years. And the company notes that over 60 percent of the 300,000-plus fans on its home-canning Facebook page are age 44 and under.

"There's definitely a passion for pickling and canning among my peers," McGreger says, but for her, that passion is also her vocation. McGreger sells her goods from two booths, one at the twice-weekly Durham Farmers' Market, the other on Saturdays in Carrboro. And when she's not busy making pickles and preserves, she's scouring local farms for freshly harvested fruits and vegetables. Being in regular contact with local farmers, she notes, is a key source of inspiration for her.

When Alex and Betsy Hitt of Peregrine Farm in nearby Graham started growing and selling hot and fruity aji peppers at the Carrboro Farmers' Market, McGreger fell in love with their color, and came up with the idea of suspending the peppers in the surfeit of jelly she has each year from local apples. That 12-Pepper Jam is now one of her most popular items.

The vagaries of yield from year to year also spark ingenuity when it comes to preserving. "In June we go up to Levering Orchard at Ararat, above Mount Airy, to pick sour cherries. In the natural world, this is probably the most intense flavor you will ever taste," she says. But one year the rains caused a very short season, so instead of making the pure sour cherry preserve she'd put up from a bumper crop the year before, she made Mountain Cherry Preserves, a mix of the small crop of sour cherries and a more abundant sweet variety. "Turns out it's spectacular. First the flavor bites, then you get a full-on cherry, and then it just gets deeper and deeper."

The dependence on fruit and vegetable availability and the need to wing it in response means her plans can change daily. "While Moe, my son, and I have breakfast, I drink my coffee and make my plans," McGreger says. "On Friday I get a list from Eastern Carolina Organics, a local

SPICY GREEN TOMATO PICKLES

ACTIVE: 35 MIN **TOTAL:** 4-10 DAYS

TO MAKE AHEAD: Refrigerate fermented pickles for up to 1 year

EQUIPMENT: Two ½-gallon or one 1-gallon container (crock, glass jar or food-grade plastic bucket), quart or gallon sealable plastic bags

These half Jewish deli, half Southern-style green tomato pickles are fermented rather than brined in a vinegar solution. The fermentation takes a little more time, but it's time well spent as these delightfully sour pickles attest. Great as a snack or side or as a topping for burgers and sandwiches. At Farmer's Daughter, April McGreger uses the leftover brine to spike her heirloom tomato Bloody Mary mix, and you can too! Be sure to use firm green tomatoes without any blush of pink, as ripening tomatoes will turn mushy during fermentation.

- **8 cups cored and sliced green tomatoes (about 3 pounds)**
- **5 cloves garlic, chopped**
- **1-2 fresh jalapeños, halved lengthwise**
- **1 ounce fresh dill (a large handful), preferably with flowering heads attached**
- **2 tablespoons pickling spice**
- **6 cups cold filtered water**
- **2 tablespoons plus 2 teaspoons pickling salt *or* fine sea salt (not iodized), plus more for water weights**

1. Clean your pickling container(s) with hot, soapy water.

2. Place tomatoes, garlic, jalapeño, dill and pickling spice in alternating layers in the container(s), leaving about 4 inches of space at the top.

3. Whisk 6 cups water and salt in a large bowl until the salt is completely dissolved, then pour the brine over the vegetables until just covered.

4. Next, prepare water weights filled with salt brine to help keep the pickles fully submerged during fermentation. (If the bags leak they won't dilute your pickle brine.) For ½-gallon containers, use quart-size bags; use gallon-size bags for a gallon container. Make more salt brine (1 tsp. pickling or sea salt dissolved per cup of water) and fill a bag (or bags) about half full; tightly seal. Place the filled bag on top of the pickles and make sure all the pickles are fully submerged in their liquid.

5. Cover the container loosely with a clean cloth and store in a cool place (60° to 75°F) out of direct sunlight, with a tray underneath to catch any liquid that may bubble up during fermentation.

6. Check the pickles every day and skim off any bits of scum, yeast or mold that may form on the surface of the liquid. At temperatures above 70°F, yeast and mold are more aggressive, so fermenting in a cooler environment requires less maintenance.

7. After 4 to 10 days, depending on the temperature, fermentation will be complete. You'll know the pickles are ready when they have a fresh, tart smell and bubbles no longer rise to the surface. Taste the brine. If the saltiness is not balanced with sourness, you can continue to ferment another day or two. When you like the taste, transfer the pickles to the refrigerator in their container (or decant into smaller containers). The pickles will keep in the refrigerator for up to 1 year as long as they are submerged in brine.

MAKES: ABOUT 8 CUPS (¼-CUP SERVING)

Calories 11, **Fat** 0g (sat 0g), **Cholesterol** 0mg, **Carbs** 2g, **Total sugars** 2g (added 0g), **Protein** 1g, **Fiber** 1g, **Sodium** 79mg, **Potassium** 96mg

GET APRIL'S RECIPE for Taqueria-Style Pickled Carrots at *eatingwell.com/webextra*

GIARDINIERA

ACTIVE: 1 HR **TOTAL:** 1¼ HRS

TO MAKE AHEAD: Store at room temperature for up to 1 year if processed in a water bath.

EQUIPMENT: 6 pint (2-cup) canning jars, canning equipment

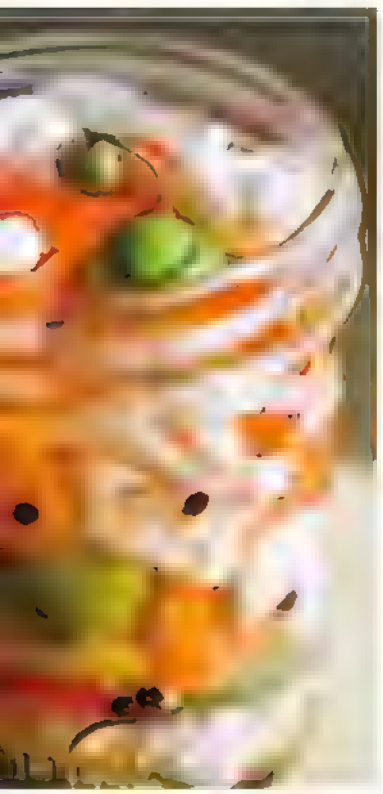
A quartet of garden vegetables—cauliflower, carrots, green beans and spring onions—plays a starring role in this best-of-summer pickle. Bright-green Castelvetrano olives from Sicily have a sweet, almost nutty flavor. Look for them in well-stocked supermarkets with other olives.

- 4 cups white-wine vinegar
- 3 cups water
- 1 tablespoon pickling salt or fine sea salt (not iodized)
- 12 cloves garlic, halved
- 6 bay leaves
- 3 tablespoons whole black peppercorns
- 5 cups small cauliflower florets
- 3 stalks celery, sliced on the diagonal ¼ inch thick
- 3 small carrots, sliced on the diagonal ⅛ inch thick
- 3 golf ball-size spring onion bulbs or boiling onions, halved lengthwise and thinly sliced
- 1 medium red bell pepper, sliced into ¼-inch strips
- 1 cup green bean pieces (2-inch)
- 1 cup green Castelvetrano olives or other large green olives, pitted if desired
- 6 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil for serving

1. Before starting the recipe, read "Canning Know-How" (*page 74*) and gather the needed equipment. Prepare 6 pint (2-cup) canning jars and lids (*see Prepare Jars, page 74*).

2. Combine vinegar, water and salt in a large nonreactive saucepan (*see Tip, page 73*) and bring just to a boil. Stir until the salt is dissolved. Set aside.

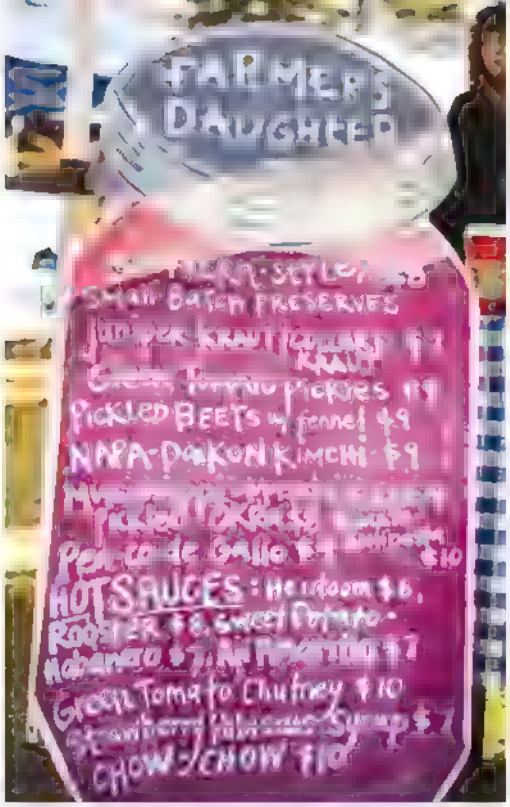
3. Place 4 garlic halves, 1 bay leaf and ½ tablespoon peppercorns in each sterilized jar.



4. Toss cauliflower, celery, carrots, onions, bell pepper, green beans and olives in a large bowl. Pack the mixture into the prepared jars, leaving 1 inch of headspace. Fill the jars with the hot brine to within ½ inch of the rim (see *Fill & Seal, page 74*). Wipe rims clean, place lids on jars and screw on the bands. Process for 10 minutes in a boiling water bath (*see Process, page 74*). (If you do not want to process the jars in a boiling-water bath, you can refrigerate the pickled vegetables for up to 2 months.)

5. To serve: When you open the jar, add 1 tablespoon oil to the top. As you remove the vegetables, they'll be coated with a little oil, which will temper their acidity. Refrigerate after opening.

MAKES: ABOUT 12 CUPS (¼-CUP SERVING) **Calories** 57 **Fat** 5g (sat 1g) **Cholesterol** 0mg, **Carbs** 3g, **Total sugars** 1g (added 0g), **Protein** 1g, **Fiber** 1g, **Sodium** 90mg, **Potassium** 131mg.



farm-to-table distributor, that says what will be available the following week." McGregor places her order and starts figuring out how she will use that week's harvest.

"In June, right after strawberries it's usually blueberries and I do them plain and with lemon verbena. In summer, my priority is fruit." But sometimes a crop doesn't yield as much as hoped and then? "It's peaches. Peaches have a longer season and are plentiful here, so I fill in with them if other fruit isn't available," she says.

One year, nestled in at her breakfast table, it was Collard Kraut, inspired by a too-small harvest of cabbage but a bumper year of the leafy greens. Mixing half of each and seasoning with cumin, smoked pepper and garlic, McGregor thought she'd created an original. She later found out from the older market farmers, though, that collard kraut has a long tradition in the region.

That story makes her grin. "For brand purposes, I want regional specialties," she says, "and I also want very much to keep the traditions alive." And certainly, the craft of canning is all about tradition. She notes, it's what writer, farmer and agrarian philosopher Wendell Berry called "the housewife's economy."

The housewife's economy is what April grew up with in Vardaman, Mississippi, where her mother, grandmother and aunts "put up" the bounty of their gardens. "In my own home, my dad would bring in a five-gallon bucket overflowing from the garden and say, 'Can y'all do anything with this?' And the women would study for a moment and then smile and say, 'Yes.' That's exactly what I'm doing here."

RONNI LUNDY *is the author of five cookbooks including* Shuck Beans, Stack Cakes and Honest Fried Chicken. *She lives in western North Carolina.*

STYLING: PATSY JAMIESON. WITH CAROLYN CAVENER (FOOD); DANENE PAUL & SANO (PROPS)

INTENSE STRAWBERRY PRESERVES

ACTIVE: 1½ HRS **TOTAL:** 5½ HRS

TO MAKE AHEAD: Store at room temperature for up to 1 year if processed in a water bath.

EQUIPMENT: 5 half-pint (1-cup) canning jars, canning equipment

April McGregor makes her strawberry preserves in small batches, reducing the amount of time the fruit is heated and retaining more of its intense fresh flavor. Additionally, McGregor uses about 25 percent underripe berries in the mix of berries because they're higher in natural pectin, so including them makes a firmer, better preserve.

- **4 pounds fresh strawberries, washed and patted dry**
- **3 cups sugar**
- **⅓ cup fresh lemon juice**

1. Before starting the recipe, read "Canning Know-How" (*page 74*) and gather the needed equipment.

2. Hull strawberries and cut any large ones in half. Combine with sugar and lemon juice in a large, nonreactive bowl (*see Tip, below*). Cover and let stand for 4 hours at room temperature or refrigerate overnight.

3. When you are ready to cook, prepare 5 half-pint (1-cup) canning jars and lids (*see Prepare Jars, page 74*). Place a saucer and 4 small spoons in the freezer for testing the consistency of the preserves later.

4. Stir the strawberries to evenly distribute the sugar and transfer to a heavy 6- to 8-quart nonreactive pot. Place over medium heat and cook, stirring frequently, until the sugar has melted completely and the strawberries begin to foam, 5 to 15 minutes.

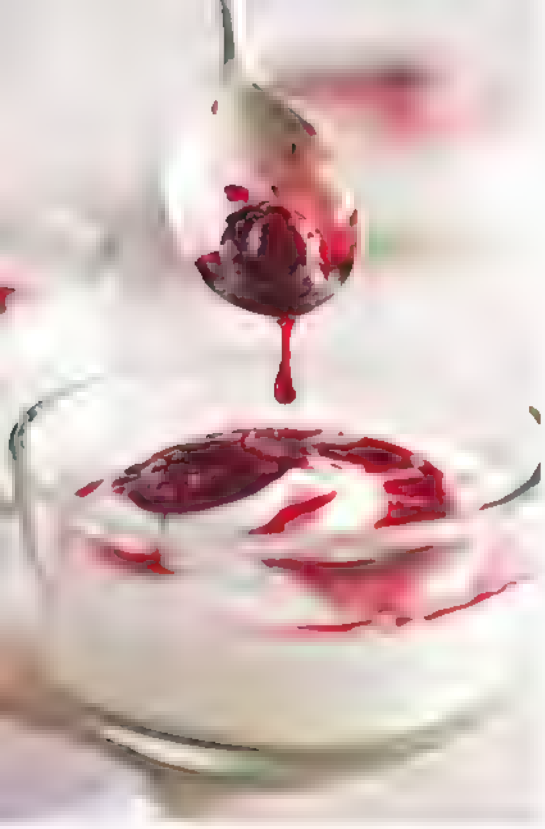
5. Increase the heat to high and boil rapidly, stirring frequently and scraping the bottom with a heatproof spatula to prevent sticking, until the mixture looks thick, shiny and darker, 15 to 20 minutes. If the jam begins to boil close to the top of the pot or scorch on the bottom, immediately reduce the heat.

6. To test if the preserves are ready, remove from heat and place a little of the preserve liquid on one of the spoons from the freezer. Rest it on the saucer and return to the freezer for 3 to 4 minutes. Drop the sample from the spoon onto the saucer; if it's thick enough to stay mounded without running or spreading, the preserves are ready. If it's too runny, return the pot to a boil and cook for about 5 minutes before testing again. When the preserves are done, skim excess foam from the surface.

7. Fill the sterilized jars to within ¼ inch of the rim (*see Fill & Seal, page 74*). Wipe rims clean, place lids on jars and screw on the bands. (Any extra preserves can be stored in a small container in the refrigerator.) Process for 5 minutes in a boiling-water bath (*see Process, page 74*). (If you do not want to process the jars in a boiling-water bath, you can refrigerate the preserves for up to 2 months.)

MAKES: ABOUT 5 CUPS (1-TBSP SERVING) **Calories** 36, **Fat** 0g (sat 0g), **Cholesterol** 0mg, **Carbs** 9g, **Total sugars** 9g (added 8g), **Protein** 0g, **Fiber** 0g, **Sodium** 0mg, **Potassium** 34mg.

The Right Bowl for the Job
When making slightly acid foods, like these preserves, be sure to use nonreactive pots or bowls that are stainless-steel, enamel-coated or glass (not aluminum or cast-iron). This will prevent the acidic foods from reacting with the container, which can result in off colors and/or flavors.



SPICED CHERRY PRESERVES

ACTIVE: 2½ HRS **TOTAL:** 6½ HRS

TO MAKE AHEAD: Store at room temperature for up to 1 year if processed in a water bath.

EQUIPMENT: 6 half-pint (1-cup) canning jars, cheesecloth, kitchen string, canning equipment

These preserves are delectable with warm scones, over vanilla ice cream or swirled into plain yogurt. If you have access to sour cherries, you can substitute them for up to half of the sweet cherries and increase the sugar to 3 cups.

- 6 pounds sweet cherries, pitted *(see Editor's Pick, page 34)*, divided
- 1 Granny Smith apple, halved
- 2⅔ cups sugar, divided
- 7 tablespoons fresh lemon juice, divided
- 1 cinnamon stick
- 2 whole star anise
- 2 whole cloves
- 1 vanilla bean, split in half
- Zest of 1 large orange
- ⅓ cup finely chopped candied ginger *or* candied orange *or* lemon peel
- ½ cup good brandy (optional)

1. Before starting the recipe, read "Canning Know-How" *(right)* and gather the needed equipment.

2. Combine half the pitted cherries, apple, 1 cup sugar and 3 tablespoons lemon juice in a heavy 6- to 8-quart nonreactive pot *(see Tip, page 73)*; bring to a boil over high heat. Cook, stirring frequently, until the cherries are soft, 8 to 10 minutes. Discard the apple.

3. Run the cherries through a food mill or press them through a chinois into a large, nonreactive bowl. (If you don't have a chinois or food mill, press the cherries through a sieve or colander, using a large spatula or wooden spoon to press out as much juice as possible.)

4. Place cinnamon stick, star anise, cloves, vanilla bean and orange zest on a 6-inch square of cheesecloth and tie up with kitchen string to make a little bag.

5. Place the spice bag in the bowl with the strained cherries. Add the remaining (pitted) cherries, the remaining 1⅔ cups sugar, 2 tablespoons lemon juice and candied ginger (or candied orange or lemon peel) and stir to combine. Cover and let stand for 4 hours at room temperature or refrigerate overnight.

6. When you are ready to cook, prepare 6 half-pint (1-cup) canning jars and lids *(see Prepare Jars, right)*. Place a saucer and 4 small spoons in the freezer for testing the consistency of the preserves later.

7. Discard the spice bag and scrape the cherry mixture into the 6- to 8-quart pot; bring to a boil over high heat, stirring frequently to dissolve the sugar. Boil vigorously, stirring frequently and scraping the bottom with a heatproof spatula to prevent sticking, for 15 minutes. If the jam begins to boil close to the top of the pot or scorch on the bottom, immediately reduce the heat.

8. After 15 minutes of boiling, stir in brandy (if using) and the remaining 2 tablespoons lemon juice. Return to a boil and cook about 5 minutes more.

9. When the preserves look reduced, and thick, test if they're ready: remove from heat and place a little of the preserve liquid on one of the spoons from the freezer. Rest it on the saucer and return to the freezer for 3 to 4 minutes. Drop the sample from the spoon onto the saucer; if it's thick enough to stay mounded without running or spreading, the preserves are ready. If it's too runny, return the pot to a boil and cook for about 5 minutes before testing again. When the preserves are done, skim excess foam from the surface.

10. Fill the sterilized jars to within ¼ inch of the rim *(see Fill & Seal, right)* and process the jars *(see Process, right)*. If you do not want to process the jars, you can refrigerate the preserves for up to 2 months.

MAKES: ABOUT 6 CUPS (1-TBSP SERVING)

Calories 45, **Fat** 0g (sat 0g), **Cholesterol** 0mg, **Carbs** 11g, **Total sugars** 10g (added 6g), **Protein** 0g, **Fiber** 1g, **Sodium** 0mg, **Potassium** 64mg.

CANNING KNOW-HOW

EQUIPMENT

- Canning jars with rings and new lids
- Canning pot with a rack or a large pot plus a heatproof rack that fits into the bottom of the pot
- Chopstick
- Canning funnel
- Jar lifter
- Lid wand or tongs to help remove lids from hot water
- Clean cloth to wipe the rims of jars

PREPARE JARS

Select the number of canning jars, rings and new lids you need. Start with new lids each time; undented, rust-free bands can be reused. Wash in hot soapy water and rinse well.

Jars: Place the rack in the pot and place the jars, right side up, on the rack. Add enough water to fill and cover the jars by at least 1 inch. Cover the pot and bring to a boil.

To sterilize the jars, boil them, covered, for 10 minutes; then turn off the heat.

Keep the jars in the hot water (with the pot covered) while you prepare the recipe.

Lids: Place the new lids in a small saucepan, cover with water and bring to a gentle simmer. Very gently simmer for 10 minutes (taking care not to boil). Turn off the heat and keep the lids in the water until ready to use.

FILL & SEAL

When you're ready to fill the jars, remove them from the water and place on a clean towel (if they're placed on a cold surface, the jars could crack). Using a funnel, fill jars to within ¼ inch of the rim for fruit preserves and within ½ inch of the rim for pickled vegetables.

Run a chopstick around the inside of the jar to release air bubbles. Wipe the rim with a clean cloth. Use a lid wand (or tongs) to remove the lids from the hot water. Place lids and dry rings on the jars. Tighten until just finger-tight (won't move with gentle pressure) but don't overtighten.

PROCESS

Using a jar lifter, return jars to the pot with the warm water, placing them on the rack without touching one another or the sides of the pot. If the water does not cover the jars by 1 to 2 inches, add boiling water as needed. Cover the pot and bring to a boil. For half-pint jars, boil 5 minutes; for pints, jars, boil 10 minutes.

When processing is finished, turn off the heat, uncover the pot and leave the jars in the water for 5 minutes. Use the jar lifter to transfer the jars to a towel, with some space between each jar. (Placing hot jars on a cold surface could cause them to crack.) Let stand, without moving, for 24 hours.

CHECK THE SEAL

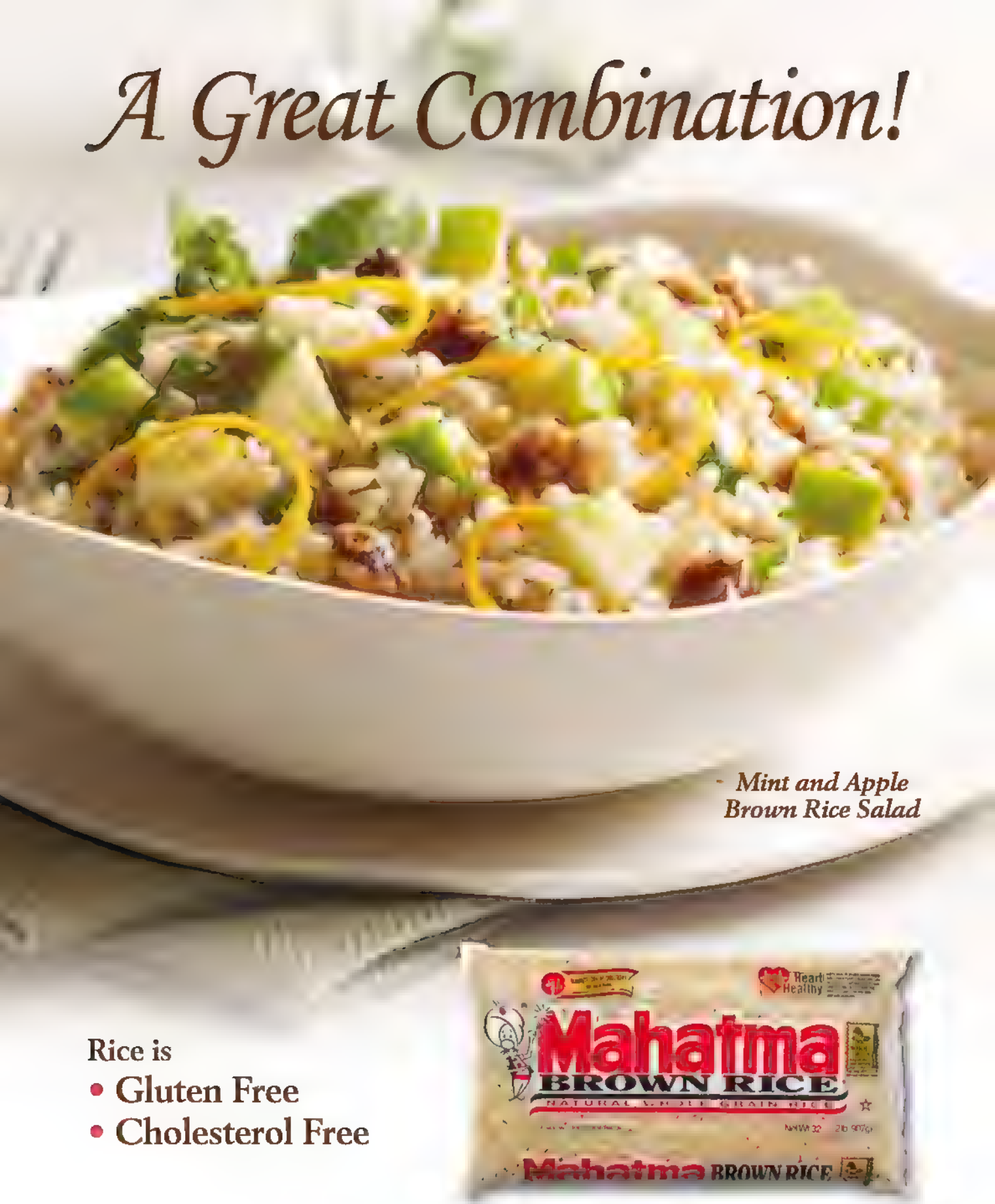
After 24 hours, unscrew the rings and test by pressing lightly on the center of each lid. They should have a slight concave indentation and neither yield to your pressure nor pop back. If a seal is not complete, you can process again in boiling water according to directions or store any unsealed jars in the refrigerator.

RESOURCES

Canning equipment is available in hardware stores and at *canningpantry.com* (complete kits $43-$75).

BACKGROUND © SVETLANA PRIKHNENKO/SHUTTERSTOCK

A Great Combination!



- *Mint and Apple Brown Rice Salad*

Rice is
- Gluten Free
- Cholesterol Free

For this recipe and more visit www.mahatmarice.com.

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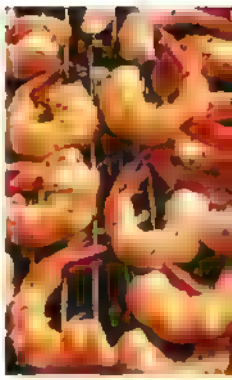
WHAT A CATCH In the Gulf of Mexico, most shrimping takes place at night, when cooler temperatures help keep shrimp fresh-tasting. The crew of the *Lady Nora* will sometimes stay out weeks at a time, trawling the waters for shrimp.



Our appetite for shrimp is colossal, but can the world's oceans keep up? Is farmed better? Is imported safe? How do you find the best? Here's what you need to know about America's favorite seafood.

Tiny Shrimp Big Business

By Ben Paynter

Recipes by Carolyn Casner

Location photography by Craig Lee

Food photography by Christopher Shane

It's after midnight inside the cramped cabin of the *Lady Nora*, a fishing trawler being battered by a storm about 10 miles off the coast of Texas in the Gulf of Mexico. Two grocery store executives in rumpled shirts and jeans are wedged into a small wooden booth to taste the day's first catch. A deckhand standing at a nearby stove sets down a paper plate piled with just-boiled shrimp.

David McInerney tears off the head of one, slurps out the juices and shucks the shell of a tiny, translucent curl of meat. Pinching it by the tail, he lifts the steaming morsel into the air, theatrically appraising it before finally taking a bite. "This stuff is really good," he says. The meat is rich, buttery and semisweet with a hint of fresh-ocean brine—sort of like a mini lobster. Jeff Ludwin agrees: "That's as good as they get, right?"

McInerney is a co-founder of Fresh Direct, an online grocery store that acts like a cross between Amazon and Whole Foods, delivering from their warehouse to doorsteps in New York, New Jersey, Connecticut, Delaware and Pennsylvania. Sourcing good food is what the company is about. And right now finding a source for the most delicious, fresh shrimp is McInerney's mission. Ludwin is his seafood buyer. But after looking at the ship's huge flash-freeze tank, both are already calculating several ways that great flavor can disappear.

The reason that fresh taste gets lost is because shrimp isn't what it used to be: once a special food reserved for fancy occasions and celebrations, shrimp has become a global commodity that must be procured cheaply in bulk to satisfy demand; in the process, taste sometimes gets the short end.

For the last decade, shrimp has been America's most popular seafood—a low-fat, high-protein, vitamin B_{12}- and selenium-rich dinner staple lining restaurant buffets and

supermarket freezer aisles alike. Americans eat about four pounds of shrimp per person each year. That nearly beats out runners-up canned tuna and fresh salmon combined.

Such cravings have sparked a Bubba Gumpian wave of efforts to land ever-greater quantities of these tiny crustaceans. Shrimp are harvested one of two ways: wild-caught in the ocean with nets or farmed. But both methods come at a high cost. In the U.S. alone, shrimp nets kill some 52,600 sea turtles, part of an estimated 1.8 million tons of global bycatch annually. Some farming has triggered massive shrimp pandemics and destruction of fragile mangroves. And it isn't just the environment that's paying the price—so is our health, with the illegal antibiotic dosing of shrimp, the spread of antibiotic-resistant bacteria and the use of preservatives that pump up our sodium intake and may even cause allergic-type reactions.

Carl Safina, Ph.D., founder of the Blue Ocean Institute, a conservation group, and a professor of marine science at Stony Brook University in New York, says that most shrimp production, particularly what happens outside the U.S., isn't sustainable. "Most of it is produced in a way that either harms other creatures or destroys a lot of habitat."

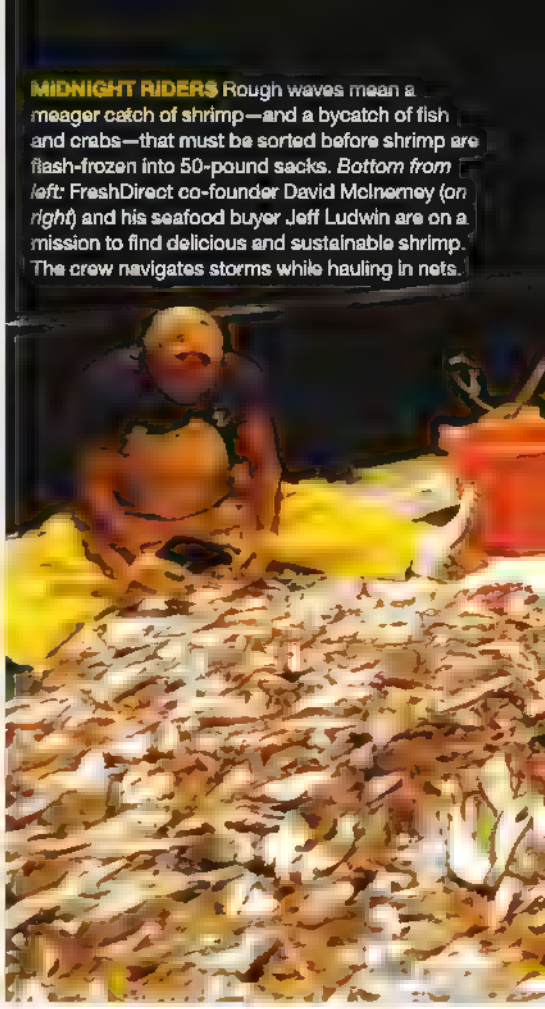
But all is not lost for shrimp lovers. That magical confluence of taste, sustainability and health is possible—and some food entrepreneurs have rediscovered it.

For McInerney, a former chef who's cooked at a three-Michelin-star restaurant in France and the famed Bouley in New York, the impetus to search out the holy grail of shrimp came last June after watching a mysterious disease called Early Mortality Syndrome strike shrimp farms in several countries at once. The outbreaks have since been linked to bacteria that can fester in the dirty ponds and overcrowded holding tanks of some shrimp farms. While not harmful to humans, the disease has proved difficult to control and has wreaked havoc on the seafood market. In 2013, Thailand, the world's biggest shrimp exporter (with a 500,000-ton annual production in recent years), lost 30 percent of its crop. Prices skyrocketed. There had to be a better way to source, thought McInerney.

He decided to look closer to home for fresher, wild shrimp. Hence, his reason for being out on a ship in the Gulf in the middle of the night. The country's biggest shrimp populations reside there, feasting on plankton from the region's fertile marshes. McInerney wanted to see firsthand how harvesting really works.

Shrimp ships haven't changed much over the last century. Trawlers generally extend a boom off each side of the boat and then drop weighted, cone-shaped nets that drag along the bottom. Because shrimp are so tiny, each net's mesh is ultra-small, capturing other sea life as well. In 1987, the U.S. passed a law requiring trawl nets to include turtle-excluder devices, trapdoors that swing open when hit by endangered sea turtles. Those same nets can also catch up to six pounds of fish for every pound of shrimp, so in 1996 the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration required fleets to add a small escape chute for fish to wriggle out.

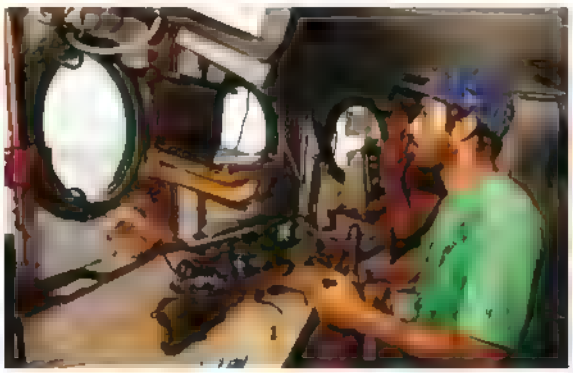
Those efforts have made U.S. wild-caught shrimp more sustainable. According to the Monterey Bay Aquarium's Seafood Watch, a consumer-awareness program that creates sustainability guidelines, bycatch ratios in domestic fisheries are about 50 percent lower with the improved nets. That's good news. Still, U.S. shrimping operations are niche: U.S. farmed and wild-caught account for only 200 million pounds per year or roughly 10 percent of what we eat. The rest is imported, primarily from Asian and South American shrimp farms. (*See our "Shrimp Shopper's Guide," page 81.*)



MIDNIGHT RIDERS Rough waves mean a meager catch of shrimp—and a bycatch of fish and crabs—that must be sorted before shrimp are flash-frozen into 50-pound sacks. *Bottom from left:* FreshDirect co-founder David McInerney (*on right*) and his seafood buyer Jeff Ludwin are on a mission to find delicious and sustainable shrimp. The crew navigates storms while hauling in nets.

Raising shrimp in captivity dates back centuries to when East Asian farmers flooded rice fields to raise small batches and coastal communities in the tropics corralled shrimp in mangrove swamps. Over the last 30 years,

In 2012, Americans ate about 1.2 billion pounds of shrimp—only 10 percent was U.S.



however, shrimp farming has gotten industrialized, borrowing factory-farm tactics to pop out perfectly cocktail-sized widgets of meat.

In the wild, a shrimp takes about a year to reach finger-size "jumbo" cocktail proportions. On shrimp farms, however—using practices likened to cattle-feedlot methods—most are harvest-ready in just a few months, allowing multiple harvests per year. Today's artificial pond operations can stretch to football-field size or even hundreds of acres. At these farms, shrimp growers, especially in Southeast Asia, use ponds that become ever more crowded and dirty as the animals get fattened up. The drive to produce more shrimp in less space has resulted in some farmers adding chemicals like commercial-grade fungicides and pesticides to the water in order to abate illness under such crowded conditions.

In addition, some overseas farmers treat the water with FDA-banned antibiotics. A recent independent study found that at least 10 percent of imported samples tested were tainted with banned antibiotics. For crooked producers, using unregulated antibiotics is a risk worth taking: the FDA inspects only about 2 percent of all seafood imports. Another report found that some imported ready-to-eat shrimp were contaminated with antibiotic-resistant bacteria. Many experts believe the widespread use of powerful antibiotics and the resistant superbugs that develop as a result can make consumers more vulnerable to bacterial infections.

There are two types of shrimp farms: coastal and inland. In Asia and South America, the rise of coastal farms has led to the clear-cutting of mangrove swamps, destroying the habitat of millions of fish, shellfish and birds. Coastal practices are also risky because they exchange water directly with the ocean. In recent years, shrimp escapees from U.S. farms have popped up in trawls off the coasts of Texas and South Carolina. Those marauders can carry disease: Gulf surveys have found sporadic infections from lethal farm-based viruses like White Spot Syndrome.

In contrast, inland pools reduce the potential for escapes. But both types of farms still suffer from a broader issue: what to do with the wastewater from the ponds, which is contaminated with old food and feces. The U.S. regulates water quality and dumping practices. In a closed-loop shrimp farming system, between 95 and 97 percent of the water is reused, so the amount of waste water generated is very low. The tiny fraction of water that does leave the system is filtered and treated to standards similar to sewage. Overseas, however, this waste water is often more potent, laced with lots of unregulated chemicals. It typically is dumped—untreated—onto nearby land or into the ocean. When overcrowded operations get hit with disease outbreaks, many are simply abandoned, leaving behind a sludge that, according to the Mangrove Action Project, a global organization working to conserve mangrove forests, has contaminated an estimated 620,000 acres of now-barren land.

farmed and wild-caught. Most came from shrimp farms in Asia and South America.

Shrimpers in the Gulf of Mexico have other issues to contend with. For instance, McInerney's midnight snack aboard the Lady Nora was from a test catch. It came from a side net dangling alongside the boat to help the crew estimate the haul below. But when the main nets are finally reeled in and dumped on deck a few hours later, rig man Mario Moreno, a contract shrimper from Mexico, looks disappointed about the weather's impact on their sparse haul. "Mal temps, mal production," he says, grabbing a metal rake to sort through the huge piles of mostly small fish and some crabs. Even with turtle excluders and fish escape hatches, many small sea creatures still end up as bycatch.

Weather is just one of the challenges facing Gulf shrimpers. Rising fuel costs, industry damage from Hurricane Katrina and mandatory Gulf fishery closures during the 2010 Deep Water Horizon oil spill have caused Gulf fleets to shrink more than 50 percent over the last decade. Last year, things were supposed to get even tougher when the Monterey Bay Aquarium's Seafood Watch red-listed all shrimp brought to port in Louisiana. That's because the state doesn't enforce a federal law requiring certain vessels to have turtle-excluder devices (TEDs). "That's not to say there aren't Louisiana fisherman using

LONG HAUL After docking in Brownsville, Texas, frozen sacks of shrimp are trucked to Louisiana, where they will be sorted by size and packaged.

TEDs, but what you need is as close to 100 percent compliance as possible to make sure the sea turtle populations are not being impacted by the fishery," says Robin Pelc, the Aquarium's fisheries research manager.

Perhaps the surprising part has been the state's response: there wasn't one. With shortages from disease hitting imports, Louisiana's business is still strong, says Karen Profita, the executive director of the Louisiana Seafood Promotion and Marketing Board. While some sustainable-minded grocers like Whole Foods have switched to sourcing from boats that land at Texas or Alabama ports, Profita says that there hasn't been a huge incentive to change the state law because most retailers haven't blackballed Louisiana shrimp.

The broader question of whether Gulf shrimp is even safe to eat after the oil spill has an easier answer: Yes. In April 2010, NOAA and the FDA temporarily closed 37 percent of the fishery, an 88,500-square-mile swath stretching from the Texas coast to Florida. They then inspected more than 8,000 fish outside the quarantine zone for evidence of polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons, a compound present in oil that's been in the ocean for a while and at high levels may cause cancer in humans. According to the independent National Academy of Sciences report, everything tested came back at a safe level for consumption. Part of the reason for that could be the quick reproductive cycle of shrimp. In a way, the species is engineered for its own comeback. One shrimp can lay more than 500,000 eggs per year.

A Flavor Guide to the Best North American Shrimp

Pink shrimp are found everywhere from the Oregon coast to Florida. They are sweet and delicate.

White shrimp are slightly sweeter with a softer texture and more mild taste. Most farm-raised shrimp are Pacific whites, which tend to be milder with a less oceanlike taste.

Brown shrimp represent the majority of shrimp caught in the Gulf; they have a firm texture and slight iodine taste.

Spot prawns are caught along the rocky floor of the Pacific coast and British Columbia with traps that yield virtually no bycatch. They are generally large, firm and sweet.

One of McInerney's other concerns won't disappear by going wild. Until the early 1980s, most shrimp pretty much went straight from ocean to freezer, stored on ice-loaded day boats for the journey in between. The process allowed the catch to remain as pure as the seawater they swam in. But to get bigger hauls more efficiently, boats are now

ILLUSTRATIONS: JOHN DE BOGNE

out for weeks at a time and the meat travels thousands of miles before reaching the grocery store. So producers add preservatives along the way to keep shrimp fresh longer.

After being sorted on the *Lady Nora*, shrimp are tossed into a 50-pound mesh sack and flash frozen in a nearby chill tank filled with salt, water and an additive called sodium bisulfite, an industrial bleaching agent. When applied to foods, bisulfite slows decomposition. For shrimp, it also slows melanosis, a condition that causes the shell membrane to blacken. (The shrimp aren't spoiled when the shells blacken; Americans just prefer them flawless.) While the FDA considers bisulfite safe, some people are sensitive to it.

The second commonly used shrimp preservative is sodium tripolyphosphate (STP), a rehydrating agent that is applied at the processing plant. Shrimp are 80 percent water, so they tend to get wrung out during peeling and even more dried out when stored in grocery store freezers. To prevent that, most shrimp coming off a boat get thawed, rinsed, shucked and then coated with STP before being quickly refrozen for resale. (*For more on STP's effects, see guide, right.*) As the industry transitioned from boutique to bulk production, using both additives became standard procedure, making finding chemical-free, lower-sodium shrimp challenging.

But some processors are returning to the old ways. Calvin Nguyen is the founder of Shrimper's Pride, a label owned by the New Orleans-based Vietnamese American Commercial Fisherman's Union. The collective has about 1,000 Vietnamese, Laotian and Cambodian captains, most of whom were granted asylum in the U.S. in the mid-'70s after fleeing persecution in Vietnam. As they re-settled in coastal communities alongside the Gulf in Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama and Florida, many returned to their native trade. In 2002, Nguyen decided to bring his fellow countrymen together, hoping to combine their marine skills and newer preservative practices to compete with imports. After starting an accompanying hibachi restaurant and watching his STP-soaked catch sizzle down to nothing, he changed his mind.

Now, his crew fish at night when it's cooler, use compressors to super-chill their tanks to about -30°F to freeze catch even faster and make shorter runs. Instead of

Shrimp Shopper's Guide

To buy the best shrimp—environmentally sound, delicious and healthy—read the labels or ask your local fishmonger. Here's what you need to know:

Wild Shrimp to Choose

There are over 3,000 species of shrimp but only four considered sustainable: pink shrimp from Oregon (a Seafood Watch best choice); spot prawns from the Pacific Northwest; brown, white and pink shrimp from the Gulf of Mexico (except Louisiana); and any shrimp from U.S. and Canadian waters in the northern Atlantic.

- Look for the Marine Stewardship Council certification label to ensure you're getting sustainably fished shrimp.
- Brands that follow sustainable practices include Shrimper's Pride and Dominick's.
- While frozen has the fresh-ocean flavor, try Wild Planet's canned Oregon pink shrimp for a quick salad.

Best Farmed Shrimp

Although closed-loop farming is the most eco-friendly, labels rarely include information on farming practices. However, here's information you can find:

- Shrimp raised in the U.S. is generally considered eco-friendly.
- Look for these two logos that certify shrimp were farmed sustainably: the **Global Aquaculture Alliance's** blue fish logo or the turquoise checkmark logo of its European counterpart, the **Aquaculture Stewardship Council**.
- Some brands are vetted by retailers like Whole Foods or a third party like Seafood Watch, which enforce rigorous standards on suppliers. These include Selva Shrimp, Henry & Lisa's, Captn's Pack and Greene Prairie.

Check for Preservatives

For best taste and health, limit preservatives. Here are the three to watch out for:

- **Sodium bisulfite** is considered safe by the FDA, though some people are sensitive to it. It's only required to be on the label when it exceeds 10 parts per million.
- **Sodium tripolyphosphate (STP)** bulks up shrimp, causing them to shrink when cooked. It boosts sodium levels by more than four times in some brands. To figure [illegible] the label and compare it to this baseline: untreated raw shrimp has a sodium count of about 250 mg for every 100 grams.
- [illegible] resorcinol, a compound with antiseptic properties (also in throat lozenges). The FDA

The Right Size & the Freshest Pick

[illegible]

Find out the 6 best seafood choices—and 6 to avoid—at *eatingwell.com/webextra*. For more on shrimp sustainability, refer to Blue Ocean Institute's Seafood Guide or Monterey Bay Aquarium's Seafood Watch.

preservatives, they use extra salt that can be rinsed off later. Shrimper's Pride fishes in the Gulf and south Atlantic, labeling its catch with a QR code that indicates the region where the shrimp was caught. They mandate that all boats, including those in Louisiana, use bycatch reduction and turtle-excluder devices.

A Better Shrimp Farm

Finding sustainably farmed shrimp requires looking at factors like water quality and what the shrimp get fed. As a basic rule, U.S. farmed shrimp are considered a "good alternative" by Seafood Watch because federal and state laws regulate water quality. U.S. farms also use 30 percent less food for shrimp than most overseas processors—about 1½ pounds in for every pound of shrimp that comes out. Feeding shrimp less yet higher-quality food means a more efficient and healthier food production.

Some overseas companies have also converted to the more eco-friendly closed-loop systems, which clean and recirculate wastewater to eliminate water contamination and shrimp escapees.

The point: Not all farms are bad. Domestic wild-caught shrimp alone can't feed everyone, so it's important to have a variety of sustainable and ethical options.

For his part, McInerney feels like wild-caught wins out for one important reason: that authentic oceanic taste. When dawn breaks over the *Lady Nora*, he heads out on deck to fire up his own mini grill. By now, everything has been treated with bisulfite. He tosses a few of the treated shrimp onto

STORM SURVIVORS After an especially rocky night on the boat, Jeff Ludwin, David McInerney, photographer Craig Lee and the author appreciate the calm of day

Tomatillos—tart fruits that look like husk-covered green tomatoes—add a savory tang to this charred-tomatillo sauce served with shrimp and grits.

[illegible] & Grits with Tomatillo Sauce

ACTIVE: 1¼ HRS **TOTAL:** 1¼ HRS

[illegible]

- 1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- ½ cup medium- to coarse-ground yellow cornmeal *or* grits
- 2 cups low-sodium chicken broth
- 2 cups low-fat milk
- ¾ teaspoon salt, divided
- ¼ teaspoon freshly ground pepper
- 1 pound tomatillos *(see Tip, above)*, husked and rinsed
- 1 large onion, cut into ½-inch-thick rounds
- 3 poblano peppers
- 2 slices bacon
- 20 raw shrimp (16-20 per pound), peeled and deveined *(see Tip, opposite)*
- ½ cup chopped fresh cilantro

1. Heat oil in a large saucepan over medium heat. Add garlic and cook, stirring, for 1 minute. Add cornmeal (or grits), broth, milk, ½ teaspoon salt and pepper. Bring to a boil, stirring constantly, until the mixture thickens, about 5 minutes. Partially cover, reduce heat to a simmer and cook, stirring occasionally, until thick and very creamy, 45 minutes to 1 hour. Let stand 5 minutes before serving.

2. About 30 minutes before the grits are done, preheat broiler to high.

3. Place tomatillos, onion slices and poblanos on a rimmed baking sheet and broil 3 to 4 inches from the heat source, turning once, until the peppers are blistered and the onion is beginning to color, 5 to 10 minutes.

4. Transfer the tomatillos to a food processor (or blender); puree until smooth. Transfer to a large saucepan. When cool enough to handle, peel the peppers and remove stems and seeds. Chop the peppers and onion and add to the pureed tomatillos along with the remaining ¼ teaspoon salt; bring to a simmer over medium heat. Cook, stirring, until thickened, about 5 minutes.

5. Meanwhile, cook bacon in a large, heavy skillet over medium heat. Remove to a paper-towel-lined plate; crumble. Add shrimp to the pan and cook, turning once, until just cooked through, 3 to 5 minutes.

6. Stir the bacon and cilantro into the tomatillo sauce. Serve sauce and shrimp over the grits.

SERVES 4: ¾ CUP GRITS, ⅓ CUP SAUCE & 5 SHRIMP EACH

Calories 331, **Fat** 9g (sat 2g), **Cholesterol** 168mg, **Carbs** 34g, **Total sugars** 15g (added 0g), **Protein** 31g, **Fiber** 6g, **Sodium** 709mg, **Potassium** 1,145mg

STYLING: CYNTHIA GOSSELIN FOOD

SHRIMP CAKES WITH SPICY CAJUN MAYO

ACTIVE: 1 HR **TOTAL:** 1 HR

Shrimp cakes are common fare all over the Gulf Coast, but these are unique because they're made with whole-wheat breadcrumbs, packed with fresh vegetables and are delectably crisp without having been deep-fried. Serve them as a first course, on top of a salad or on a whole-wheat bun with the Cajun mayonnaise, lettuce and tomato.

- 6 teaspoons extra-virgin olive oil, divided
- ½ cup finely chopped onion
- ½ cup finely chopped celery
- ½ cup finely chopped red bell pepper
- 1 pound raw shrimp, peeled, deveined *(see Tip, below)* and coarsely chopped
- 1 cup fresh whole-wheat breadcrumbs
- 1 large egg, lightly beaten
- 2 tablespoons lemon juice, divided
- 2 teaspoons salt-free Cajun seasoning, divided
- ⅛ teaspoon salt
- ½ cup low-fat mayonnaise

1. Heat 2 teaspoons oil in a large heavy skillet, such as cast iron, or a nonstick skillet over medium heat. Add onion, celery and bell pepper and cook, stirring, until soft, 4 to 6 minutes. Transfer to a large bowl and let cool for 10 minutes.

2. Add shrimp, breadcrumbs, egg, 1 tablespoon lemon juice, 1 teaspoon Cajun seasoning and salt to the bowl. Thoroughly combine, then form into 8 cakes, 3 inches wide and about ½ inch thick.

3. Wipe out the pan, add another 2 teaspoons oil and heat over medium heat. Add 4 shrimp cakes and cook, turning once, until the shrimp are just cooked through, 4 to 5 minutes per side. Transfer to a plate and cover to keep warm. Repeat with the remaining 2 teaspoons oil and the remaining 4 cakes, reducing the heat as necessary to prevent overbrowning.

4. Meanwhile, combine mayonnaise and the remaining 1 tablespoon lemon juice and 1 teaspoon Cajun seasoning in a small bowl. Serve the mayonnaise with the shrimp cakes.

SERVES 4: 2 SHRIMP CAKES & 2 TBSP MAYO EACH

Calories 322, **Fat** 15g (sat 3g), **Cholesterol** 213mg, **Carbs** 21g, **Total sugars** 5g (added 1g), **Protein** 25g, **Fiber** 3g, **Sodium** 576mg, **Potassium** 457mg.

Tip: To peel shrimp, grasp the legs and hold onto the tail while you twist off the shell. To devein, use a paring knife to make a slit along the length of the shrimp. Remove the dark digestive tract (or "vein") with the knife tip. *For information about buying shrimp, see "Shrimp Shopper's Guide," page 81.*

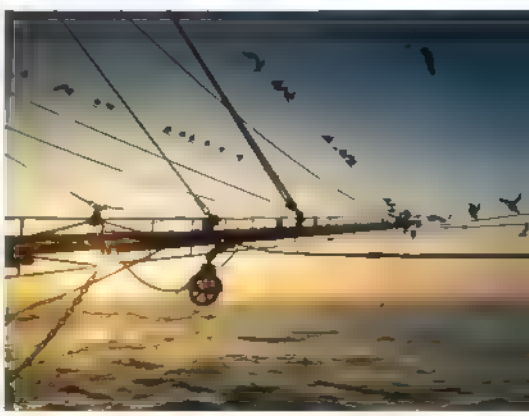
the grill. They simmer for a bit, turning a caramelized orange color. Compared to last night's tasting, though, today's meal disappoints. "The texture is different," he says. "Last night's catch reminded me of lobster." These are harder to describe. McInerney offers up several potential descriptors—"saltier... more mild... hard, gelatinous"—before settling on a fairly nongourmet way to sum it up. "They are resilient," he says. "When you bite down, it springs back."

Thankfully, he won't have to wait much longer for something more delicious. In March, McInerney committed to convert FreshDirect's sales to a 100 percent wild-caught, chemical-free line of shrimp by the end of the year. These shrimp capture that ocean-fresh taste he has been searching for. He says he's open to selling a chemical-free farmed product if it can achieve that same taste, something several manufacturers who want to win back his business claim to be working on.

Standing on the ship's stern, McInerney stares out at the sea. "It's a different story that's starting to emerge," he says of all the behind-the-scenes factors that no one really thinks about when they head to the supermarket. "If people are educated, they might choose a better alternative."

FreshDirect is an industry trendsetter, so this marks a big moment for one of the ocean's smallest foods. Consumers deserve better. As we understand more about where our food comes from, we can vote with our dollars at the cash register. Slowly but surely, the booming global shrimp industry is being better regulated and understood. This is how all great sea changes start.

BEN PAYNTER *is a senior editor at* Men's Health. *He won a 2012 James Beard Award for a story about the sweetener Truvia.*



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OUR BEST FRIED RICE

Traditionally, fried rice is made when it's time to use up whatever leftovers you have on hand. Or it's something you order from the local takeout joint. But we think it's worth making from scratch. We make fried rice the *EatingWell* way, using just a little bit of heart-healthy peanut oil, plenty of fresh vegetables, lean protein and whole-grain brown rice instead of white. The delicious result is a distant cousin to greasy fried versions. Besides classic combinations, like this Cantonese chicken fried rice, we love mixing it up with other Asian-inspired flavors like Thai beef and mango or Korean pork and kimchi. So put down the takeout menu and turn the page to learn how to make healthy fried rice our way.

—Breana Lai, M.P.H., R.D.

SEE US MAKE FRIED RICE THE EATINGWELL WAY

GAS DOWNDRAFT COOKTOP COURTESY JENN AIR COM

Fried Rice: Step-by-Step

Learn how a wok and a few ingredients can create a balanced dinner in about 30 minutes.

1 START WITH A SEASONED WOK

Seasoned woks are naturally nonstick, which allows you to cook with less oil. Most are sold unseasoned; follow the manufacturer's instructions for seasoning before use. If you don't have a wok, a large cast-iron skillet is a good alternative.

2 USE COLD BROWN RICE

You'll need 2 cups cooked rice for 4 servings of fried rice. For extra fiber and nutrients, be sure to use brown rice. Use leftover rice or make a fresh batch and let it cool. To cool it quickly, spread on a large baking sheet and refrigerate until cold, at least 15 minutes. If it's too warm, it will stick to the wok.

3 PREP AHEAD

Before you begin cooking, cut ingredients into uniform, bite-size pieces to ensure even cooking. Measure out seasonings and place everything next to the stove. Once you turn on the heat, you can't step away from the wok.

4 COOK OVER HIGH HEAT

A very hot wok sears food quickly, locking in the best flavor. To test if yours is hot enough, add a drop of water before adding the ingredients—it should sizzle and evaporate instantly.

5 COOK THE EGGS FIRST

Heat **1 teaspoon peanut oil** in a large flat-bottomed carbon-steel wok over high heat. Beat **2 large eggs**, pour into the wok and cook, without stirring, until fully cooked on one side, about 30 seconds. Flip and cook until just cooked through, about 15 seconds. Transfer to a cutting board and cut into ½-inch pieces.

6 CHOOSE LEAN PROTEIN

Opt for lean chicken, steak or pork and sear it in just a little oil. For vegetarian fried rice, try seitan *(see Tip, page 91)*. Add **1 tablespoon peanut oil** to the wok along with **3 sliced scallions**, **2 teaspoons grated fresh ginger** and **2 teaspoons minced garlic**; cook, stirring, until the scallions have softened, about 30 seconds. Add **protein** *(see chart, page 89)* and cook, stirring, for 1 minute.

7 ADD FRESH VEGETABLES

Vegetables add nutrients and turn fried rice into a balanced main dish. Add **2 to 4 cups diced or chopped vegetables** *(see chart, page 89)*; cook, stirring, until just tender, 2 to 4 minutes. Transfer the contents of the wok to a large plate.

8 STIR-FRY THE RICE SEPARATELY

Add **1 tablespoon peanut oil** and **2 cups cold cooked brown rice** to the wok and stir until hot, 1 to 2 minutes. As you stir, pull the rice from the bottom to the top so it all gets coated with oil and evenly cooked.

9 SEASON JUDICIOUSLY

Return the protein, vegetables and eggs to the wok and add **seasonings** *(see chart, page 89)*. Prepared sauces like soy sauce add great flavor, but are often very high in sodium. For healthier fried rice, season with just a little sauce and choose reduced sodium alternatives when possible.

PHOTOS BY ALLEN STYLING: CARY NEASHAM WITH BREANNA LAI; R. KEITH COOPER COURTESY OF BELSHE

EDITOR'S PICK

"I like to use a rice cooker because it makes perfect rice every time. This Zojirushi Micom cooker has a brown rice setting and 'fuzzy logic' technology that adjusts heat and cook time for the type of rice."

–Breana Lai, Associate Food Editor

Turn the page to see 5 different ingredient and flavoring suggestions.

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Better Than Takeout

Follow the step-by-step technique on page 86 and choose a fried rice flavor below. Or get creative with your own combinations

FRIED RICE TYPE	PROTEIN	VEGETABLES	SEASONING
1 CANTONESE CHICKEN & BOK CHOY	1 pound boneless, skinless chicken thighs, trimmed and cut into ½-inch pieces	2 cups chopped baby bok choy ½ cup diced carrots	3 tablespoons oyster sauce
2 KOREAN PORK & KIMCHI	1 pound pork tenderloin, cut into ½-inch pieces	1 cup diced zucchini 1 cup diced carrots	1 cup chopped kimchi 3 tablespoons Korean chile paste (gochujang)
3 [illegible]	8 ounces seitan *(see T.p. page 91)*, patted dry and cut into ½-inch pieces	2 cups small broccoli florets 2 cups sliced shiitake mushroom caps	¼ cup "lite" coconut milk 2½ tablespoons reduced-sodium soy sauce
4 JAPANESE SHRIMP & EGGPLANT	1 pound raw shrimp (21-25 per pound; *see buyer's guide, page 81*), peeled, deveined and halved	2 cups diced eggplant 1 cup shelled edamame (thawed)	¼ cup ponzu sauce
5 THAI BEEF & MANGO	1 pound strip steak, trimmed and cut into ½-inch pieces	1 cup diced red bell pepper 1 cup diced green bell pepper	½ cup diced mango 3 tablespoons lime juice 2 tablespoons fish sauce 2 tablespoons slivered basil

All variations make 4 servings, 1¾-1½ cups each. For nutrition information, see recipe index on page 90.

The creamy taste makes you smile!

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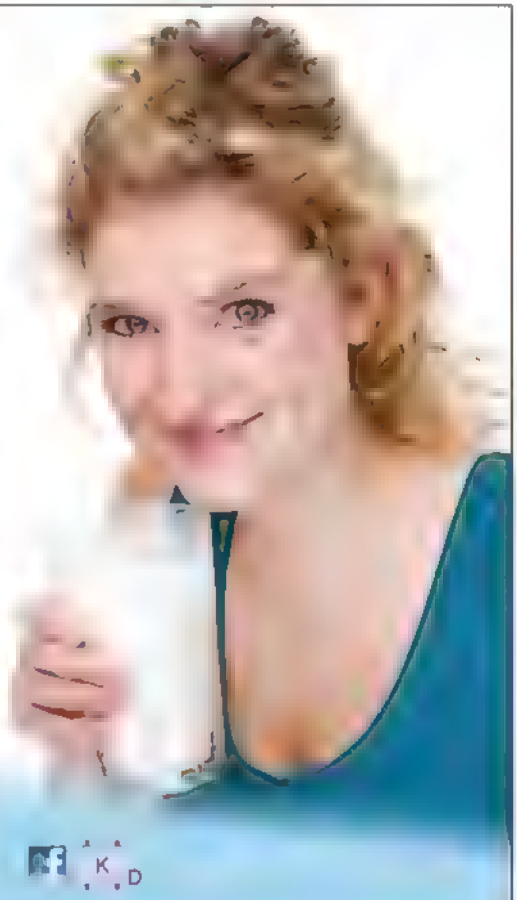

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*No significant difference has been shown in cows treated with the artificial growth hormone rBST and non rBST treated cows

RECIPE INDEX

		15 MIN OR LESS		CALORIES	FAT (g)	SAT FAT (g)	TRANS FAT (g)	SODIUM (mg)	LOW-CAL	HEART-HEALTHY	VEGETARIAN	GLUTEN-FREE	DAILY VALUE (15%+) CALCIUM	VITAMIN A	VITAMIN C	IRON
BREAKFAST																
10	Apricot Pistachio Cream Cheese Spread	■		43	3/1	4	0	45			■	■				
16	Broccoli-Parmesan Omelet	■	■	407	20/7	22	4	683			■		34	21		40	21	58
16	High-Protein Breakfast Tacos	■	■	445	16/6	43	9	602			■	■	25	29	25	16		
73	Intense Strawberry Preserves			36	0/0	9	0	0			■	■						22
16	Nut & Berry Parfait	■	■	376	15/1	35	6	83		■	■	■	34				28	20
74	Spiced Cherry Preserves			45	0/0	11	1	0			■	■						
APPETIZERS, CONDIMENTS & BEVERAGE																		
32	Fresh Cherry Lemonade	■		124	0/0	32	0	11			■	■						20
72	Giardiniera			57	5/1	3	1	90	■	■	■	■				25		32
36	Middle Eastern Layered Dip	■	■	49	3/1	3	1	130	■	■	■							
36	Quick Romesco Dip	■		130	8/1	9	1	337		■	■	■				18		
71	Spicy Green Tomato Pickles			11	0/0	2	1	79	■	■	■	■						9
36	Summer Peach Salsa	■		18	0/0	4	1	59	■	■	■	■						
36	Watercress & Spring Onion Raita	■		48	2/0	4	0	227	■	■	■							
STARTERS & SIDES																		
67	Apple, Carrot & Cabbage Chopped Salad	■	■	124	8/1	13	3	137	■	■	■	■				189		23
34	Cherry-Almond Farro Salad	■		277	13/3	36	4	339			■							
32	Frisée Salad with Cherries & Blue Cheese	■		144	9/3	12	3	423	■			■		25		31		
50	German Potato Salad		■	91	1/0	17	1	172	■	■								
64	Persian Cucumber Salad with Lentils & Sprouts	■		179	9/3	19	4	213	■		■	■						
52	Quinoa-Summer Squash Casserole		■	111	3/1	18	3	286	■	■	■	■			17			52
54	Slow-Cooker Baked Beans		■	200	2/0	35	9	307	■	■		■			32			
VEGETARIAN MAIN DISHES																		
22	Kale & Gruyère Panini	■	■	407	7/6	45	8	537	■		■		55	25	21	278		278
89	Malaysian Seitan, Broccoli & Mushroom Fried Rice	■		337	14/3	33	5	552	■	■	■				15	26		59
26	Summer Vegetable Pasta with Crispy Goat Cheese Medallions	■	■	387	15/5	53	8	452	■	■	■		16	37	25	119		63
53	Vegetarian Pinto Bean Sloppy Joes		■	283	6/1	51	11	692	■	■	■	■		34	19	71		73
FISH & SEAFOOD																		
67	Avocado & Shrimp Chopped Salad			398	25/5	21	8	374	■			■		42		115	20	102
89	Japanese Shrimp & Eggplant Fried Rice	■		378	3/2	33	5	751	■	■		■						
22	Seared Salmon with Sugar Snap-Fennel Slaw	■		308	16/3	10	3	539	■	■		■				17	100	68
82	Shrimp & Grits with Tomatillo Sauce			331	9/2	34	6	709	■	■		■	25			21	31	148
83	Shrimp Cakes with Spicy Cajun Mayo		■	322	15/3	21	3	576	■	■						19	21	49
29	Smoked Trout, Potato & Arugula Salad	■	■	294	17/5	19	2	572	■	■		■		17		23		18
CHICKEN, BEEF & PORK																		
89	Cantonese Chicken & Bok Choy Fried Rice	■	■	378	18/4	28	3	619	■	■		■				85		20
42	Chicken Club Wraps	■	■	526	26/5	39	11	901		■								17
44	Crispy Chicken Schnitzel with Herb Brown Butter	■	■	313	5/6	15	2	472	■									
65	Grilled Chicken & Nectarine Chopped Salad	■	■	341	22/6	13	3	302	■			■		24		112		18
51	Honey-Orange Chicken Drumsticks		■	245	7/2	18	0	404	■	■		■						
89	Korean Pork & Kimchi Fried Rice	■	■	401	15/3	38	5	554	■	■		■				113		17
40	Quick Chicken Braciole	■	■	236	8/3	8	1	636	■	■		■			15	16		
24	Roasted Pork Tenderloin with Rhubarb BBQ Sauce	■	■	288	10.2	25	2	395	■	■		■						
54	Slow-Cooker Brisket Sandwiches with Quick Pickles		■	401	13/3	34	5	768	■	■					23	18	36	
89	Thai Beef & Mango Fried Rice	■		417	17/4	36	4	694	■	■		■		18	17	43	25	130
42	Thai Chicken Stir-Fry with Basil & Cashews	■	■	329	18/4	16	2	664	■			■			15			37
DESSERTS																		
58	Apricot Bavarian Cream Cake		■	339	11/6	54	2	41								38		
59	Berry Chantilly Cake		■	337	7/10	41	2	172			■							25
34	Cherry-Ricotta Blintzes	■		184	5/3	30	2	118	■		■							
60	Hot Milk Sponge Cake		■	181	6/3	30	0	153	■		■							
59	Raspberry Peach Trifle Cake			374	14/8	57	3	182			■		15			18		20

KEY TO RECIPE & NUTRITION INDEX

HOW WE ANALYZE RECIPES

- All recipes are analyzed for nutrition content by a Registered Dietitian.
- We analyze for calories, total & saturated (sat) fat, cholesterol, carbohydrate, total & added sugars, protein, fiber, vitamins and minerals, using The Food Processor® SQL Nutrition Analysis Software from ESHA Research, Salem, OR. The complete analysis appears with each recipe or on *eatingwell.com*; some nutrients are highlighted here.
- Garnishes and optional ingredients are not included in analyses.

KEY TO COLUMN LABELS

45 MIN OR LESS: A recipe's start-to-finish time is 45 minutes or less.

BUDGET: Entrees that cost less than $3/serving; sides and desserts that cost less than $1.50/serving.

LOW-CAL: Entrees have ≤350 calories/serving; combination meals (protein plus starch ***or*** vegetable) have ≤420 calories; complete meals (protein plus starch ***and*** vegetable) have ≤500 calories. Side dishes, muffins, breads, desserts have ≤250 calories/serving; dips and salsas, ≤100 calories/serving.

HEART-HEALTHY: Recipes have limited saturated fat. Entrees have ≤3 grams sat. fat per serving (seafood entrees have ≤5 grams); combination meals have ≤5 grams (seafood ≤7 grams); complete meals (including seafood meals) have ≤7 grams. Side dishes, muffins, breads and desserts have ≤2 grams sat. fat per serving; dips and salsas have ≤1 gram.

VEGETARIAN: Meatless or includes meatless options.

VEGAN: No animal products. Check the labels of your ingredients, such as chocolate, to make sure they don't contain hidden sources of animal products.

GLUTEN-FREE: Does not include wheat, rye, barley or oats. Check the labels of your ingredients, such as broths and condiments, to make sure they don't contain hidden sources of gluten.

% DAILY VALUE: When a recipe provides 15% or more of the Daily Value (dv) of a nutrient, it is listed. These values are FDA benchmarks for adults eating 2,000 calories a day.

For more on our nutritional-analysis process, visit *eatingwell.com/go/guidelines*.

DAILY SWEEPSTAKES RULES *(page 67)*: **NO PURCHASE NECESSARY TO ENTER OR WIN.** Subject to Official Rules and entry at *www.eatingwell.com/WinBowl*. There will be one Daily Giveaway Sweepstakes per day. Entries for each daily sweepstakes must be received by 11:59 p.m., E.T. Open to legal residents of the 50 United States, and the District of Columbia, 21 years or older. One entry per e-mail address per day. Online entry only. Void where prohibited. Sponsor: Meredith Corporation.

TIPS & NOTES

It's the company, not the cooking, that makes a meal.
—Kirby Larson

To remove the skin from chicken drumsticks (*page 51*): Grip the skin from the meaty end of the drumstick with a paper towel and pull down toward the exposed bone until it comes off completely.

Soak dry beans before using (*pages 53, 54*): Rinse well with cold water and remove any pebbles. **To soak overnight:** Place in a large bowl, cover with 3 inches of cold water and soak at room temperature for 8 to 24 hours. **To "quick soak":** Place in a large saucepan with enough cold water to cover by 2 inches. Bring to a boil. Boil for 2 minutes. Remove from the heat, cover and let stand for 1 hour.

We like to use "flat, first-cut brisket" because it's leaner than the fattier "point cut" brisket. If the briskets aren't labeled that way, ask the butcher to help you select the right cut. For the brisket sandwiches (*page 54*) you'll need about 3 pounds after trimming.

For a vegetarian alternative to meat in dishes like stir-fries, try meaty-textured seitan—a processed wheat gluten that is high in protein. Look for it in natural-foods stores or large supermarkets near the tofu. For our Malaysian Seitan, Broccoli & Mushroom Fried Rice (*page 89*), use unseasoned seitan "strips" or "cubes" rather than flavored seitan.

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Curds & Suds

With two dozen goats and a lot of hard work, this pioneering couple has revived an abandoned farm into a thriving cheese and soap business. By Gretel H. Schueller

Photo by Mark Boughton Photography

Who They Are Living in New York City, James and Eileen Ray, 20-somethings working in finance and fashion, respectively, knew they wanted to leave city life and start a farm. They discovered an abandoned farm in Tennessee. "The price was right, the weather mild enough to let animals forage year-round and the local food scene not too developed," James says. But the place was a wreck: the soil depleted of nutrients, the land overgrown with thorny bushes and grasses. "The worst forage possible," notes James. The Rays decided to raise goats, which are happy to eat plants other animals will snub. With hard work, the soil improved, the landscape diversified and the dilapidated barn is now a creamery and milking parlor. Thus was born Little Seed Farm.

What They Do "My second word was cheese. I love cheese," says Eileen. So their first offering was a herd share: 50 members joined, receiving ¼ pound of organic cheese each week. Eileen made 22 different cheeses—from creamy chèvre to squeaky curds of Cheddar. This year, 100 members signed up. The pair found another clever use for their grass-fed goat's milk: soap. James has taken a culinary approach to his soap making. He even partnered with a local brewery on some blends. The "summer" soap combines milk, citrusy pale ale, lemongrass and basil; it smells good enough to eat.

Why It's Cool The duo is part of a small, but growing group of hipsters revitalizing the current face of farming. The Census of Agriculture points to a graying trend: in 2012, the average farmer's age was 58, up 3 years from 2002. "Our generation has strayed so far from physical labor—but it's a really rewarding lifestyle," says James. And a successful one: starting with three soap blends in 2012, they now offer 11, selling nearly 6,000 bars in 2013. This year they hope to sell around 30,000—largely through *littleseedfarm.com*.

Know someone doing something interesting, innovative or fun with food who you'd like to see in *EatingWell*? Tell us about them: email editor@eatingwell.com with "tastemaker" in the subject line.

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